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WHIT-WEEK ANNIVERSARY MEETINGS.

OUR anniversaries' week opened very happily with Monday evening's meeting of the National Conference Guilds' Union at Essex Hall, over which the Rev. F. K. FREESTON presided, and a report of good work was presented. Among the helpful addresses given was one by Miss GITTINS, "A Call to Service." The Rev. JOHN ELLIS was appointed president for the coming year. Then on Tuesday came the Sunday School Association meetings, the practical meeting of delegates in the morning, followed by lunch at the Holborn Restaurant, and the annual meeting, at which the President, Miss EDITH GITTINS, took the chair. The report was of great interest, and we shall return to it in a future issue. It was a special pleasure to hear that the London County Council Education Department had purchased over 400 copies of two of the Association's publications: "The Children's Hour," by Miss F. E. COOKE, and Miss K. F. LAW-FORD's "Stories of the Early Italian Masters." The announcement of new books in course of preparation was also very welcome: A collection of short biographies of men and women connected with our household of faith, by the Rev. E. L. H. THOMAS; a small book on ethical teaching for the use of teachers, by Dr. S. H. MELLONE; and a selection of short poems with illustrative lesson notes, for the

use of younger classes, by the Rev. J. RUDDLE. The great value of the three books published during the year was repeatedly referred to, and it was urged that they should be in the hands of all teachers and in our homes, viz.: the Rev. A. W. FOX's lessons on "The Practical Teaching of Jesus of Nazareth," GIRAN's "Jesus of Nazareth," translated by the Rev. E. L. H. THOMAS, and the Rev. A. H. THOMAS's "The Early Church." Another subject for special thankfulness was the great number of young people over sixteen in our schools. Of the Essex Hall lecture on Tuesday evening, by Dr. GUSTAV KRÜGER, of Giessen, we have an extended report, but only when the lecture is published in book form, which will be as speedily as possible, will it be fully realised how valuable and how timely this utterance is. Dr. KRÜGER's lecture on "Dogma and History," and the two lectures by Prof. DELITSCH on "Whose Son is Christ," also to be published by the Association will be found together to furnish a very powerful statement of what we hold to be the truth not only concerning the birth of Jesus, but the significance of his life and teaching for our religious life.

Wednesday's service in Little Portland-street Chapel, conducted by the Rev. R. TRAVERS HERFORD, of Stand, was attended by a large congregation, and the music, as usual, was under the direction of Mr. JOHN HARRISON, now President of the Association. The sunny morning added zest to the gathering, and the familiar hymns, "We come unto our fathers' God," and "Lord from whom all blessings flow," are always welcome. Mr. HERFORD's sermon, "Members one of another" is printed in full in our present issue, as is Mr. WHITAKER's paper at the Thursday morning conference. They are both clear and powerful utterances of earnest religious men, and they should be read and pondered together. They may stand as witness to the genuine liberty of prophesying in our open religious fellowship.

The President's luncheon at the Holborn Restaurant to representatives and speakers at the anniversary meetings, which follows the annual service, is not given to the reporters for their use, but only for the enjoyment of a very pleasant occasion. There were close upon a hundred

guests, and toasts were duly honoured. The Essex Hall lecturer sat on the President's left, and there were other welcome guests whose presence was afterwards further acknowledged at the business meeting. This followed in the afternoon, and our report will be found in another column. The resolution of thanks to the President and for the election of his successor was very happily moved by Dr. BLAKE ODGERS, himself a West-country man, who welcomed the presence of a BOWRING in the chair, and recalled honoured memories associated with that name. To Sir WILLIAM BOWRING's own services, and the noble way in which he has maintained in Liverpool the high tradition of public spirit and philanthropy associated with his family, Dr. ODGERS paid a warm tribute, and went on with equal cordiality to welcome the accession of Mr. JOHN HARRISON to the chair. "For his geniality and his music" he was welcomed; and Mr. HARRISON in response spoke with pardonable pride of his line of Nonconformist ancestors going back to two at least of the ejected of 1662, and in each generation furnishing in direct descent a minister of religion, down to the old Chowbent parsonage in which he himself was born.

The public meeting on Wednesday evening was a great success. Essex Hall was crowded, and there was a strong platform under Sir WILLIAM BOWRING's presidency. We hope to have a full report next week, but no report can give the personal touches which meant so much in the great variety of the addresses given. We may perhaps be allowed a word of special gratitude for the address by Miss EDITH GITTINS on "Religion in the Family," and for Mr. MATTHEW SCOTT's dealing with "The Man in the Street."

On Thursday morning, after the devotional service conducted by the Rev. J. A. PEARSON, came the conference, over which the Rev. H. ENFIELD DOWSON presided, when the Rev. W. WHITAKER read his paper on "The Changing Social Base and the Future of our Churches." This after a speech or two in comment (there was no time for more) was followed by the Women's Meeting, over which Lady BOWRING presided, when after a statement by Miss HELEN BROOKE HERFORD and some

discussion, it was decided to form a "British League of Unitarian Women," "to quicken the religious life of our churches, and to bring Unitarian women into closer co-operation and fellowship," and for other purposes. The draft rules which had been prepared were adopted, and a Committee appointed, with Lady BOWRING as President, and Miss HERFORD and Miss VIOLET PRESTON as secretaries. An amendment to the first resolution adopting the rules, moved by Miss MARIAN PRITCHARD and seconded by Mrs. FREESTON, asking for a postponement of a decision, and suggesting that it would be better to form a Union in which women and men could work together, though it found considerable support in the meeting, was not carried. In the afternoon came the meeting of the Central Postal Mission, and in the evening the *Conversazione* at the Portman Rooms, when the guests were received by the PRESIDENT and Lady BOWRING. Friday was devoted to the Temperance Association and the National Conference Union for Social Service, of all of which we hope to complete our reports in due course. Altogether we may say that the week's meetings have been full of interest and stimulus, and they certainly will furnish matter enough for discussion and for serious thought.

FOUR years ago we had the pleasure of welcoming Professor H. H. Wendt, of Jena, as Essex Hall lecturer, on "The Idea and Reality of Revelation." Next year Professor Henry Jones, of Glasgow, lectured on "The Immortality of the Soul in the Poems of Tennyson and Browning," and in 1906 Dr. S. M. Crothers, of Cambridge, Mass., on "The Making of Religion." Last year there was no lecture, and this week our pleasure has been all the greater in welcoming Professor Gustav Krüger, of Giessen. His lecture on "Dogma and History," which was given in English, will, of course, be published, and it will be found, as he said on Tuesday evening, that the second part especially, dealing with the historical origin of the creeds, is more fully elaborated in the printed copy than was possible in delivery. The lecture is of the greatest value and significance.

To know Jesus as the son of God is not to understand what theologians have written about his eternal generation, or about a mystical, incomprehensible union between Christ and his Father. It is something far higher and more instructive. It is to see in Christ, if I may say so, the lineaments of the Universal Father. It is to discern in him a godlike purity and goodness. It is to understand his harmony with the Divine mind, and the entireness and singleness of love with which he devoted himself to the purposes of God and the interests of the human race. Of consequence, to love Jesus as the son of God is to love the spotless purity and godlike charity of his soul.—*Channing*.

OBITUARY.

THE REV. WILLIAM BLAZEBY.

LESS than a month after his wife, the companion of the last seventeen years of his life, the Rev. William Blazeby, of Rotherham, and latterly of Sheffield, has been called to his rest. He suffered from an acute attack of pneumonia, and after a brief illness passed away at his residence, Ranmoor-crescent, Sheffield, early on Friday morning, June 6, in his seventy-sixth year.

In his interesting record of the Rotherham Old Meeting House and its ministers, published in 1906 to commemorate the bicentenary of the congregation, Mr. Blazeby has told us of his own life, as twelfth on the roll of those ministers. He succeeded Jacob Brettell, who took a vigorous part in the Anti-Corn Law Agitation, and was well known formerly as a hymn writer and poet, whose ministry extended from 1816 to 1859. That long ministry Mr. Blazeby followed with thirty-four years of faithful service. It was at Rotherham that his life's work was done. There he was best known, and held in very high regard.

A native of Norwich, brought up in connection with the old Octagon Chapel, William Blazeby as a boy came under the influence of John Withers Dowson and Travers Madge. Though intended for the law he chose the ministry as his profession, and in 1852 entered Manchester New College, then in Manchester, removing with the college next year to London, where his course was completed in 1858. He graduated in London University, and among his fellow-students were the Drummond brothers, C. C. Coe, C. B. Upton, G. Heaviside, and H. E. Dowson. Among the lay students at University Hall at the same time were the present Lord Airedale, and Mr. Grosvenor Talbot.

On leaving college Mr. Blazeby became assistant to the venerable Benjamin Carpenter at the High Pavement Chapel, Nottingham. At his ordination service, December 23, 1858, James Martineau preached the sermon, and John James Tayler gave an impressive charge. The welcome from the congregation was given by William Enfield and Dr. Hutton, of Derby, gave the right hand of fellowship on behalf of the ministers of the district. The young minister's brief but stimulating experience at Nottingham was followed, on Mr. Carpenter's retirement from active service, by his settlement, early in 1860, at Rotherham, where he had as near neighbours in Sheffield, Brooke Herford and J. Page Hopps.

Mr. Blazeby has told in his record how, when he became minister at Rotherham, the choir was led by a string band, and how, at his suggestion, an organ in time took its place, and how the first twenty years of his ministry were crowned by the building of the present "Church of Our Father," in place of the old chapel, opened in February, 1880. For fourteen years he preached in the new church, years marked by many tokens of affection and regard from those to whom his life's service was given. In 1885 the congregation commemorated the completion of twenty-five years of his ministry by placing a stained glass window in the church.

Mr. Blazeby was keenly interested in all educational matters, and he was one of the original members of the Rotherham School Board, on which he served for fifteen years, doing especially good work as chairman of the Finance Committee. He served also for many years on the weekly board of the Hospital and Dispensary, becoming in time chairman, and on the Board of Guardians. In the old days in politics he was closely allied to the Liberal party, and was vice-chairman of the local association, but left them on the Home Rule issue, a severance which caused him naturally a good deal of pain.

In 1891 Mr. Blazeby married Miss Mary Fisher, a member of a well known Sheffield family, long connected with the Rotherham congregation, and on his retirement in 1894 they made their home in Sheffield. Of happy disposition, overflowing with good nature, Mr. Blazeby found congenial occupation for the leisure of his retirement in literary work, of which his chapel record is the chief memorial. But he wrote many articles of interesting reminiscence, both in local papers and in the *Christian Life*.

To this notice may fittingly be added Mr. Blazeby's conclusion of his own record:

"In his retirement, while adhering to the Unitarian Christianity of Channing, he looks for the 'Church of the Future'—not in the extreme revival of the ecclesiastical ritualism of Archbishop Laud, of the maintenance of a dominant Nonconformity, partaking of the masterful spirit of the Westminster Assembly, but rather in the Apostolic Catholic Union or broad-minded Churchmen and 'largely soul'd' Dissenters, accepting in the spirit of good Richard Baxter the common Apostolic Faith, the Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments as the credentials of Christian worship and communion.

"Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they."

The funeral service on Tuesday was conducted by the Rev. C. J. Street, of Sheffield.

I WILL suppose now a man to have studied all the controversies about Christ's nature, and to have arrived at the truest notions of his rank in the universe. But this incident in Christ's history, this discovery of his character, has never impressed him; the glory of a philanthropy which embraces one's enemies has never dawned upon him. With all his right opinions about the Unity or Trinity, he lives and acts towards others very much as if Jesus had never lived or died. Now I say that such a man does not know Christ. I say that he is a stranger to him. I say that the great truth is hidden from him; that his skill in religious controversy is of little more use to him than would be the learning by rote of a language which he does not understand. He knows the name of Christ, but the excellence which that name imports, and which gives it its chief worth, is to him as an unknown tongue.—*Channing*.

THE ESSEX HALL LECTURE.

DOGMA AND HISTORY.

DR. GUSTAV KRÜGER, Professor of Church History in the University of Giessen, was this year's Essex Hall lecturer, and his lecture on "Dogma and History" was delivered on Tuesday evening, in Essex Hall, Sir William B. Bowring, Bart., president of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, in the chair. There was a large attendance, and the lecture was listened to with sustained attention and very warmly applauded at the close.

The question as to dogma, Dr. Krüger said at the beginning of his lecture, is by no means purely academic. There is at the present time much tension in the churches of Germany, between the authorities, who insist that dogma as represented by the ancient creeds must be strictly binding both on clergy and laity, and the increasing number of earnest believers who deny the validity of dogma and creed, and feel them to be an obstacle to the pure development of faith. What the end will be no one can tell, but in the interest of religion it is essential that those who take up an independent position should be clear as to the ground on which they stand. Hence the subject of the lecture, which showed dogma to be not matter of revelation, but the result of human effort, subject to the criticism of history, and thus to be set aside without injury to religion. The true matter of revelation and of faith, on the other hand, is given not as historical information, but through inward conviction of the spirit, which, therefore, historical criticism cannot touch.

The first part of the lecture dealt with attempts to overthrow dogma. When we ask, said Dr. Krüger, how it came about that not only outsiders, but earnest Christians within the Church, sought to controvert the validity of dogma, we do not look to the great Reformers of the sixteenth century for an answer, but among the anti-Trinitarians, who, as leaders of the anti-dogmatic movement, were closely allied to the Anabaptists. The Italian Faustus Socinus he referred to as a sincere Christian and a pronounced latitudinarian in religious matters, and in the Racovian Catechism, the doctrinal statement of the Anti-Trinitarians of Poland, noted the welcome surprise of the true principle of religious tolerance. Then, in the seventeenth century, in face of the fossilised dogmatism of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, came the movement of independent thought in the realm of nature and of intellectual life, Bacon's plea that science must set aside all presuppositions, the inevitable revolution resulting from the Copernican view of the universe, and Spinoza's enunciation of the true principle of Biblical criticism. The influence of Locke's "Reasonableness of Christianity" (1695) and Toland's "Christianity not Mysterious" (1696) was noted as leaving the essence of Christianity untouched. But the struggle against dogma proved harder than was anticipated. Orthodoxy turned to the principle that "Reason may not interfere in matters of faith," and then identified faith with dogma, as based on revelation, and therefore proof against rationalistic attack.

To meet this position, it must be shown that dogma is not matter of revelation, but a result of human effort, that faith and dogma are not identical, and that the attack on dogma in no way endangers faith. That proof, said the lecturer, History alone could furnish; and he went on to speak of the modern science of history, concerned with exact investigation and criticism of documents, in which Germany had taken a leading part, especially in the field of Biblical criticism and the history of dogma (and notably F. C. Baur, chief of the so-called Tübingen School). Progress, however, had been slow. The influence of the idealistic philosophy of Schelling and Hegel had been injurious. Baur himself espoused that philosophy, and the belief in God the Father, in Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit was wrapped anew in the garments of metaphysical theory, and the Church speculations regarding the Trinity and Incarnation were welcomed as supporters of philosophical constructions. Thus the illusion was created that those speculation were necessary and inseparably bound up with Christian Faith, and that dogma was the true basis of Christianity. The Orthodox eagerly seized that advantage, and in learned works, with great formal skill, maintained that Dogma, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, had been elaborated in the course of history as the necessary and authoritative expression of Christian truth. If that effect was bad, still more serious was it that those enlightened spirits, in whom faith in dogma had been destroyed through knowledge of historical truth, should conclude that with the overthrow of dogma Christianity itself was shattered. That was the result with Strauss himself, and it had a profound effect.

But is that conclusion final? If we will not surrender to such logic, the lecturer asked, must we return to the position that dogma is the true expression of our faith? The science of history shows another way—not history as the handmaid of speculation, whether ecclesiastical or philosophical, but history which aims singly at seeing things as they are. Faith has nothing to fear from history.

In the second part of his lecture, Dr. Krüger entered upon an examination of the three creeds—the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian—as the historical documents in which the dogmas of the Trinity and Incarnation are to be studied. Of special interest was his description of the conditions under which the doctrine of the God-Man, born of a virgin, obtained its hold upon the Church. It was the threatening danger of the dissipation of the reality of Christ's life in the theosophical speculations of Gnostic teachers which led to the definition of the doctrine of the Incarnation, as it appears especially in the Nicene Creed. It was a marvellous doctrine indeed, but the ideas embodied were natural to that time, and an apologist like Justin Martyr had referred to heathen parallels in the many sons of Zeus, while Origen also quoted the belief in the supernatural birth of Alexander, Augustine, and Plato. The doctrine of the Virgin Birth was insisted on not so much as a marvel as to emphasise the reality of the life and sufferings of Christ. The lecturer clearly stated the evidence for the earlier belief that Jesus was in fact the son of Joseph.

Then in the third and concluding part of the lecture Dr. Krüger turned to consider the true nature of religious faith. It is right, he affirmed, to say that we believe in God and we believe in Christ; but not that we believe in the Virgin birth, or the bodily resurrection and ascension; those are not matters of faith but of history, and are shown by historical investigation to be not sufficiently attested. "If you will know what faith is," he said, "you must descend into the depths of the human heart. If you will learn what revelation is, you must search into the deep things of God in so far as the spirit enables you (1 Cor. ii. 10). To use the language of philosophy, faith and revelation lead us into the region of value-judgments (judgments of worth, *Werturteile*). This region, however, defies investigation in the sense in which we practice inquiry in the field of history. History is not revelation."

The wonderful legend of the Incarnation, he added, "is a beautiful vesture, the most beautiful, perhaps, in which a divine thought was ever enrobed. Nevertheless, it remains the vesture, the outer garment of something greater. And that greater is the man Jesus himself." But if it is objected further that Jesus himself is mythical, that is a question which must not be shirked. Our faith in him is not grounded on history, but on inward conviction of the supreme worth of what he reveals. To make his meaning clear Dr. Krüger used the illustration of a musical man, who knows beyond dispute that what moves him so deeply does not belong to the transitory things of life, but must be of divine origin, while yet it is something which cannot be forced upon those who do not feel it. And he continued:—

"That in and through the person of Jesus a higher reality has been revealed to us, this century of criticism knows as well as any other age. If in our judgment the forms in which the Church tried to comprehend him have weakened and faltered, his image is not therefore destroyed. His glad message has outlived the centuries and up to this day is for those who are susceptible to the highest thought, as clear and illuminating as it was of old, when he sat amongst his disciples and unveiled to them the wealth of his inner nature. What he has brought to mankind men of to-day can feel in its reality with overmastering power. He freed the moral good from its embarrassing entanglement with purity through ritual, and with the chaos of popular tradition in which, in Judaism and heathenism, it was imprisoned. He did not set this good before men as the incomprehensible law of an unknown God, but as the world-embracing and yet concentrated feeling of love and purity, which makes us children of the Father in heaven, whose attitude towards us is the comfort and strength of our inner life. It raises us above suffering and sin, and teaches us to believe that the debt of the lost son may be forgiven, and that on this earth something new and marvellous may begin—the rule of God.

"All this forces itself upon the susceptible with a power not born of this world. God has revealed Himself in Jesus. Again, this statement is a judgment of worth, the highest, perhaps, that human lips can utter,

and yet a judgment that we can force upon no one to whom the words of Jesus mean nothing more than the tones of the masters mean to the unmusical. It is a faith which science cannot demonstrate but which it just as little can destroy. It is consistent with our new view of the world, when it is freed from the forms with which men once draped it, and in this process it loses nothing of its originality.

"Once in history the content of this faith became truth in the life of a man, became incarnated, to use the expression freed from its dross, and which cannot be any longer misunderstood. The pages of history reveal to us in a wonderful way the power of expansion and intensity with which the life of this man has impressed itself upon humanity. The Jesus of history has appeared to his followers in a thousand forms. No thoughtful Christian has ever drawn near to him without forming his image according to his individual understanding. What differences are there from the beginning! Imagine what a world lies between the simple people of Jerusalem as they are set before us in the Acts of the Apostles, who continued steadfastly in the Apostle's teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and prayer, and the man who wrote the astonishing words: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,' and who set before us the earthly life of the divine Logos in pictures so grand and marvellous. Yet Acts and Gospel have both of them found their place in the same sacred book, separated only by a few pages, and again near them rises the awe-inspiring figure of Christ which was created by the Rabbi of Tarsus.

"It is, indeed, a unique spectacle, that this ever-varying form, which Christ has assumed throughout the pages of history during so many hundreds of years, reveals to him whose eyes are open to the charm of history. Perhaps nowhere may we understand so clearly the meaning of the eternal in the temporal, as when face to face with this marvellous transformation."

Thus, concluded the lecturer, dogma may be set aside without hurt to religion; it is the dogmatic temper which, above all things, must be overcome. "What is eternal in Christianity is completely independent of the formulas in which the Churches of all ages have enclosed it. Here as everywhere the word is valid: The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

At the close of the lecture, the President called upon Dr. CARPENTER, who expressed their warm thanks to Dr. Krüger. The lessons of the lecture, he said, were greatly needed, in view of the Catholic attitude towards history. Recent study of the life of Christ had profoundly affected religion, as they saw how the principles of the historic Jesus must be applied to their present social, religious, and national ideals. The time was come for them to understand and carry forth to others the profound significance of his life and word.

Dr. DRUMMOND also spoke with warm appreciation of the lecture and its fundamental position that religious faith could be held apart from dogma. It was a truth many troubled minds needed to realise.

The thanks of the meeting were expressed by very hearty acclamation.

THE ASSOCIATION SERMON.

MEMBERS ONE OF ANOTHER.*

By the Rev. R. TRAVERS HERFORD, B.A.

"We are members one of another."

—EPIHESIAN IV. 25.

To be invited to address such an assemblage as this upon such an occasion is an honour of which I am deeply sensible, and imposes a responsibility of no small weight. One part of my task is, indeed, easy and pleasant, viz., to commend to your support the work of the Association whose anniversary is held to-day. I do that as one who is entirely and heartily in sympathy with the principles upon which its work is based, and as having had many opportunities of seeing, especially in that district of Lancashire which I know best, the substantial good that is done through its means. To bear witness to that good work, and to appeal for the funds by which it can be carried on with ever greater success, is, as I have said, easy and pleasant. It is less easy to say what shall be suited to this occasion, by way of general discourse; and it would be extremely difficult if I had to fill the office of a spokesman representing others and committing them to what I might say.

According, however, to the practice of all our pulpits, I have to say to you that which seems to me right and true, whether or not you agree with it; and, being called to this place and this duty, I am free to give utterance to thoughts which I should hardly have presumed to put forward without such invitation and such opportunity.

I have taken a text which suggests the thought of the fellowship of individual Christians, and the bond of union which holds them together. And I invite your attention to the question of what the fellowship of individuals means in religion, and what is possible to those who feel themselves united in such fellowship.

The membership to which the text refers is membership in what is called "the body of Christ." And, without stopping to enlarge upon that highly figurative term, I suppose we may take it that discipleship to Christ is the bond of union. As Christ was present by faith in the mind of each true disciple, the whole number of disciples, taken together, represented the whole Christ. In them was seen the whole revelation of Christ so far made to the world. Each disciple helped to make that revelation more complete, helped to embody something of the Christ spirit; each one helped to realise the Christ ideal. Thus they were members of the body of Christ, in Paul's phrase; and one can keep the substance of his thought, without the particular figure of speech, if that be to us—as I must confess it is to me—more of a hindrance than a help. We can keep the thought of simple discipleship to Jesus as a bond of union and a ground of mutual relationship, and basis for a common religious life. I use the term discipleship to Jesus rather than the wider term "Son-ship to God," which I much prefer, because for my present purpose I want to keep to the ground of Christian

religious fellowship. As between Christian and Christian the common ground is evidently their relation to Jesus, which, however, does not in the least exclude their relation to God, as children to the Father in heaven.

Christians are members one of another when they are united in a common discipleship to Jesus; and the fact that they do or do not belong to some organised institution or society does not affect that membership, although on other grounds it may be useful or convenient that they should so belong. Whatever "the body of Christ" may mean, it does not mean any institution or organised society, whether called the Church or not. The two expressions, if ever they coincided, did so only by the fact that the individual persons who then belonged to the Church were also at heart disciples of Christ. History shows that there is no necessary connection between those two kinds of membership. And, whatever may have been the case in the days of the Apostles, it is certainly not the case now that any Church does, or that any conceivable Church should, as an organised institution, include all who are at heart disciples of Christ. In the matter of religious fellowship, therefore, the essential for Christians is discipleship to Christ; and that, moreover, according as each one interprets discipleship for himself, feels its responsibility, owns its obligation, and humbly rejoices in its privileges. The question of being also a member of some society or institution is secondary and not primary, highly important, no-doubt, but not on the same line with the question of personal discipleship.

I say personal discipleship because, clearly, this is a matter of individual and not of collective obligation. The seat of religious and moral consciousness is in the individual mind. What anyone thinks and feels and believes and wills is the act of his own mind, a part of his own experience, however complete be the harmony between himself and others, and however great be the influence which others have exercised upon him in the shaping of his beliefs and the prompting of his thoughts. If a society of persons were all in absolute agreement of thought and feeling, &c., it would still be true that this was a harmony of individuals, not the act of a collective mind. There is not, except by figure of speech, a collective mind. At least, there is no known organ of a collective conscience; and when we speak of the mind of the nation, we still have to do in reality with the combined result of the several minds of the individual citizens, or the majority of them. Whatever is said or done or thought that can be called human, is said and thought and done by individual persons, however much they may be in harmony with each other, and however much they may be empowered to act on behalf of their fellows. The most extreme Socialist, Collectivist, or other advocate of combined action has to reckon with the individual at last, and cannot get away from him, do what he will. With the social and political applications of this fact I have no present concern, and shall say nothing. What is its bearing upon religion? First of all, that religion is at bottom an individual matter, the con-

* The annual sermon, preached in Little Portland-street Chapel, on Wednesday morning, June 10.

sciousness of each separate soul of its relation to God, with all that follows therefrom; and second, that any collective expression of religion in word or act is the result of so many individuals combining together, whether voluntarily or under some form of constraint. As to the first of these, that religion is the consciousness of each separate soul of its relation to God, I admit, freely, that to be conscious of such relation at all is to share in a life and thought which are greater—infinity greater—than one's own. But, all the same, the religion of the individual is so much as he apprehends of that larger life and thought, he being what he is and no more. It is in the depths of his own soul that he knows what he knows of divine truth and owns the real presence of God.

As to the second, that any collective expression of religion in word or act is the result of so many individuals combining together, whether voluntarily or under some form of constraint, the truth of that is to be seen in every religious association, from a congregation to the most inclusive organised Church. However the combination has been effected, it is still a combination. And the fact that it is an association of individual persons is only concealed, it is not disproved or annulled, by calling it an organism, a higher unity, and the like.

A congregation, as we know it amongst ourselves, is a voluntary association of persons for the purpose of mutual help in religion, through worship and work.

They combine together to maintain a place of worship and to provide public services in that place, meeting together there to join in common worship, and having for their bond of union not agreement in doctrinal beliefs, but sympathy in religious aims and principles. The members of a congregation are individual persons; and they help or they hinder the attainment of what the congregation ought to be, according as they do or do not feel in their own minds their fellowship with the rest, their responsibility for their share in whatever may be the main purpose of the congregation's existence. That purpose is to be a centre of religious influence, in the first instance on those who worship together, and in a less degree on those with whom they come into contact in other ways in their daily lives. To increase by sympathy the power of religion in the soul, and its active influence for good in other lives, is the main purpose of a congregation, as I understand it. And it attains its end when it raises up good men and women who, by the inspiration of their religion, live lives of practical helpfulness, uprightness, sympathy, and unselfish love, in whatever circumstances they may be placed, whether in the home or the larger field of public philanthropy. Worship that results in nothing is worthless, and religion that remains as the dream of a lazy soul is not piety but delusion. But, when all is said and done, it is still true that the congregation is an assemblage of individuals; and the whole worth of what they do is conditioned by the fact that as individuals they each contribute their share to the total result. Apart from the individuals who compose it, a congregation is nothing, and can do nothing; and I am obliged to regard it as a pure fallacy to suppose that it can, and a mistake to say

that it ought, to act as a whole, as a unity, as an organism, as itself a member of a higher organism.

In our group of Free Churches, the congregation has been a voluntary association of individuals, on some such lines as I have described. They have, for the most part, maintained entire independence of outside control in regard to the management of their own affairs, and whatever of spiritual life and influence has been fostered in their midst has been due to the zeal and devotion, or the want of it has been due to the slackness and indifference, of their individual members.

Now, we have been told in recent years that this state of things is all wrong, that our congregational system, such as it is, leads to a deplorable waste and loss of spiritual energy. "We are fragments, and not a totality; we have no centre; the parts do not make a whole. . . . We need to combine the energies of our Churches—i.e., our congregations—to create a living cohesion of forces, to be baptized into one heart, one spirit, one hope, pledged in all to loyal companionship, bound into the powerful unity of one organic frame, a society, a Church, whose very breath and life and being shall be instinct with the joy of a common life and the power of a real fellowship." Words which you doubtless recognise as quoted from a famous address. And the same thought underlies the proposal, also recently put forward, for a wide and comprehensive Church to include all Christians, who are now split up into numberless separate groups, and to make them realise that they have a corporate life, are members of one and the same institution, in spite of differences of creed and practice. "Protestants" (as we have read in *The Hibbert Journal*) "have quite lost the idea of The Church, and Protestantism is going to pieces. It was founded on individualism; and although that was kept in check for a while by enforcing the authority of the Bible, yet now that authority is overthrown and rampant individualism is making havoc of religious union." Our own Free Churches (we read further) have shown the glaring fallacy of individualism, and the only remedy is to revive the idea of a Church, or rather of The Church. The Roman Catholics have, we are told, been wiser than the Protestants in that they have never let go the idea of corporate life amongst the members of the one Church. And we are invited to restore that idea without the doctrinal restrictions which the Roman Catholic system imposes. The place of doctrinal uniformity is to be taken by a plentiful supply of symbol, ritual, and outward adornment of the place of worship and the service which is to be therein performed. The stray sheep are to be provided with a roomy and attractive fold, and must be taught how much better it would be for them to be all collected together in that fold than, as at present, perversely to "turn every one to his own way," and wander at will to such pasture as he may prefer. To bring the members of our Free Churches to acknowledge their weakness and to adopt the offered remedy may well be called by those who advocate this policy their Great Problem.

I must confess, for myself, that I have

not the slightest desire to see the Church idea revived amongst us, the idea of belonging to a Church, an organised society, at all events any other than the congregation of which they are members. There is at present no such thing as The Unitarian Church, to which all Unitarians belong; nor any Free Christian Church, to which all Free Christians belong. And the reasons which hitherto have prevailed against the formation of any such body could apply equally to the formation of a Free Catholic Church, which should include Free Christians of all shades of belief, and amongst them most, if not all, of those who are commonly called Unitarians. The whole proposal seems to me to be an attempt, however well meant, to put the clock back, and to retreat to a stage of religious development which most Free Christians have outgrown and left behind. And I think that the good which is expected from the revival of the Church idea can be, and ought to be, obtained without it, while harm would certainly result from that revival from which at present we are free.

Consider the case of the Roman Catholic Church, which has had the wisdom to retain the idea of corporate life amongst its members. In the centuries before the Reformation the Roman Catholic Church included virtually all the Christians in Western Europe. Apart from occasional heretics, such as the followers of Wiclif and Huss, the Roman Catholic Church was the body to which all Christians belonged. (We may leave out of account for the present purpose the Greek Church.) The Roman Catholic Church was a huge society or institution, with a membership of many millions of persons. It had its conditions of membership, its system of administration, its organised machinery, its staff of officials from the Parish Priest in the lowest rank to the Pope at the top. Every Catholic felt himself to be a member of this great society, sharing with all the rest in the benefits and privileges which it offered, and owning the duty of obedience to its lawful requirements. As a loyal member, he submitted to the guidance of his Church in all matters of faith and morals. He believed what the highest authority in the Church set forth as the truth. And if he did not always do what that authority declared to be right for a Christian, he felt that he ought to do it, and was guilty of a sin if he did not do it. Strictly speaking, he had no individual belief of his own. He had a conscience, indeed, and he was a soul, a spiritual being in communion with God. But his intercourse with God and his use of his conscience were regulated for him by the guides whom the Church provided for him, and he was quite content that this should be so. He handed over to the keeping of the Church the full responsibility for his soul, and all that concerned it. I am not saying that the system did not work very well. Those who suffered most by it were not the rank and file of members of the Church, but the officials who assumed the responsibility of guiding the rest. As regards the ordinary Catholic, he probably found much satisfaction and help from the thought that he belonged to a great society—so long, at all events, as he did not try to go his own way, but was content

to be governed. The advantage he gained was, in particular, the sense of comradeship with all Catholics in his own or any other country. Wherever he might go, he would find the same form of worship, the same assistance of a Priest able and willing to advise him, the same protection from an authority before which even kings had sometimes to bow. If he had no personal liberty in matters of belief, he did not usually feel the want of it. He saw that those who rashly claimed it were turned out of the Church as heretics, even if no worse thing happened to them. He took warning by their fate, and was glad to be safe in the fold. The loyal Catholic, in the Middle Ages, had a happy time of it, so far as his religion was concerned. He left to the Priest the solving of religious doubts and difficulties. He was quite ready to stand by his Church, and by every member of it, as a loyal and devoted supporter. On the religious side he did not count as an individual; he was only one amongst a great number.

In the sixteenth century came the break up of this state of things, through the revolt of the Protestants; and the meaning of that revolt is the emergence of the individual, his assertion of his own rights and responsibilities against the controlling authority of the Church. I know, of course, that neither Luther nor Calvin put it in this way. They set up the authority of the Bible, and they did not allow private judgment any more than the Pope did. But, all the same, it was the revolt of the individual, and they themselves are the proof of it. Luther broke with the Church of Rome precisely because his own conscience, his own individual judgment of right and wrong, rebelled against the decree of that Church. He had no authority for what he did, except his own sense of duty. And if it be said that he claimed the authority of Scripture, that was only of the Scripture as he thought it ought to be interpreted. It is true that neither Luther nor Calvin allowed to their followers such a degree of liberty as they had asserted for themselves. They tried hard to define the truths necessary to salvation in creeds and articles based upon Scripture; and they required conformity to the creed approved by authority quite as strictly as the Catholic Church had done. But all the same, even under the strictest forms of Protestantism, the individual counted for more than he had done under the Roman Catholic system. Religion was to the Protestant more of a directly personal concern than it had been to the Roman Catholic. He felt a certain responsibility for his own salvation, which the Roman Catholic did not feel. The Protestant was told to read his Bible for himself, instead of going to the Priest for his instruction. And Luther opened the floodgates by translating the Bible into the language of his own country. The Protestant ceased to feel himself a member of one great society, including all Christians. He no longer had the sense of corporate fellowship in a visible institution; but, on the other hand, he had more feeling of personal concern and immediate relations with God, as a soul whom Christ had saved. And wherever you compare Protestant religion with Catholic, you will find that there is in the Protestant religion more

of the individual and less of the multitude than there is in the Catholic. And since it is true that religion is, in the last resort, a matter of immediate relation between each soul and God, as felt by that soul, it follows that the Protestant theory stands for a higher and truer conception of religion than the Catholic one; it represents more accurately the root fact.

Now Protestantism took as its watchword the authority of the Bible, and not the rights and responsibility of the individual, although the latter was in fact its real basis. And the history of Protestantism is the history of the gradual weakening of the authority of the Bible, and the assertion of the responsibility of the individual. That process has taken more than three centuries to work out; but it is virtually completed now. The final authority of Scripture has been undermined, and, by a rapidly increasing number of people, is no longer recognised. Protestantism, as a Bible religion, is practically worn out, and only holds its place from ancient custom and traditional veneration. The obvious result is that the real essence of Protestantism, viz., the spiritual worth of the individual, is coming into view, after being hidden away under the disguise of Scripturalism. It is this emergence of the individual which apparently frightens those who want to revive the Church idea, with its sense of corporate life.

If this comparison between the Catholic and the Protestant systems be correct, then it follows that you cannot have the corporate life, the sense of membership in the church, except by sacrificing more or less of the freedom and responsibility of the individual, except, i.e., by losing and throwing away much of what has been learned and gained through Protestantism. If the revived Church, which is offered to us, is to be anything more than a name, if it is to be in any degree a society which shall include some and exclude others upon certain conditions, if it is to have officials who shall exercise any sort of controlling or guiding authority, then whoever joins it parts with some of his own individual privilege and responsibility. And his only gain will be a share in the corporate life of a church instead of in the narrow interest of a sect, or the isolation of one who belongs to no sect. If, on the other hand, the revived Church is to respect the position of the individual, and leave him as he ought to be left, entirely free to develop his religious life on his own lines, then there is nothing to which the special name of the Church can be applied, and I don't see any reason for bringing the name into use.

None are more likely to feel the loss implied in the reviving of the Church idea than those who, in our own congregations, have learned that individualism means, and have, up till now, ordered their congregational life on individualist lines; and they, most of all, will see that to revive the Church idea is to go backwards and not forwards.

It is all very well to talk about combining congregations so that they shall no longer be so many separate groups but an organised unity. It is still individual persons you have got to deal with; a congregation can only act as a whole through chosen representatives, and the

combined Church could only be managed by chosen representatives, which means that the government would be in the hands of a few officials, as is the case in every organised society. It is all right, and a very good thing to adopt such a plan in a society for a special kind of work, distributing funds and the like. But it is a very different thing when it comes to directing and controlling the interests of a number of congregations, for it tends to make them merely parts of a machine (even though it be called The Church) instead of collections of individual persons each feeling his own responsibility, his own sense of fellowship. The fallacy of the whole proposal is that it treats the congregation as being for all purposes a unit, which can be combined with other similar units. And if that be, as I believe it is, a fallacy in theory, it is, or would be, no less a mistake in practice. A congregation is, after all, only a collection of individual persons; and however it may be amongst other Christians, no conceivable organisation will ever be able to speak the mind of all Unitarians, or act in accordance with all their wishes. For good, or for ill, there is amongst us far too much ingrained love of liberty, and sense of responsibility, for us even to be docile members of the Unitarian (or any other) Church. And any institution which, not content with promoting fellowship and intercourse between the members of our various congregations, should attempt to act as the organ and mouthpiece of all our congregations fused together as the Church, would, I believe, have a weary time of it.

Those who advocate the revival of the Church idea desire to make individuals realise that they are members one of another, sharing in a common discipleship, a common Christianity. So do I. But what is to prevent them doing that now? If they do not do it, they are failing in what is already required of them, and has been ever since Jesus walked this earth. It is not that they are prevented by their unfortunate Protestant traditions and training, or their lamentable congregational weakness, and now need the Free Catholic Church to bring them together. There is nothing whatever to prevent them. For it is not as if the individual must be forever shut up in himself, unable and unwilling to enter into any relations with his fellow men. He can be, of course, but only by failing to be what he ought to be. For, as an individual, he is a soul in immediate relation to God, with a mind, will, and conscience of his own, through which he enters into that relation. To know God as the Father in Heaven, to own the duty of obedience to Him, and to feel love towards Him, is impossible to the selfish soul that is shut up in itself. It is possible only to one who at the same time owns his relation to his fellow-men, is bound to them by sympathy, goodwill, and the desire to help. The individual only then becomes what he ought to be, when he is at the same time social, when he sees that he cannot live his true life, or be his true self, except in conjunction with his fellow-men; and when he does that, not with a view to his own self-improvement, but out of a real brotherly love to his fellow-men. Train the individual to realise what is required of him as a

responsible being, answerable to God, and he will have a sense of fellowship with his brother-men such as he would not get from any institution, from sharing in the corporate life of any Church. That is offered to us as a means of creating the fellowship. What is wanted is the sense of fellowship which can create the institution *or do without it*, as it will.

Are there, then, to be no institutions? What about congregations? Or unions of congregations? Why, this: that a congregation is, as I have said, a voluntary association of individuals for a certain purpose; and in proportion as they realise what that purpose is, they are drawn closer to each other, and build up a common life. There are other congregations in their neighbourhood, formed on similar lines. There is nothing whatever to prevent the bonds of sympathy and goodwill and desire to help from extending to these other congregations also; *i.e.*, the members of the one recognising their fellowship with the members of the other. And there is nothing whatever to prevent the formation of district associations, for the purpose of giving practical expression to the sympathy and desire to help which are felt by the several persons in the several localities. And so on throughout the country, or the whole world. And all this, simply as individuals acting up to their Christian profession. Further, the individual Christian, if he act up to his profession, will feel sympathy and desire to help towards other Christians of every shade of belief, according as he may have opportunity. The true individualist will own all mankind as his brothers in the sight of God, and do what he can for them. What more could you get from *The Church*, Unitarian, Free Catholic, or whatever it be called? You would not get a bit more of the feeling of fellowship than can be got already. And what you would get would be not the spontaneous outflow of sympathy, but the discharge of an obligation imposed by the very fact of membership. You would also get the drawbacks of centralised management and control, and consequent limitation of the individual's responsibility to be and do his best of his own free will. An organised institution means government, and government means that some few persons exercise authority over all, in the name of all. That is all right, and very useful in secular matters, but it is not all right in the concerns of religion, because those are the concerns of individual souls, between themselves and God. To set up again *The Church* would be to take from the individual, or rather persuade him to part with what he has no right to part with, his responsibility towards God to be his best, and live his highest life out of himself. He must gain his sense of corporate life with his fellow-men through his own consciousness of being along with them one of the children of God, and not out of membership in an institution.

Apart from such organisations as the Church of Rome, the Church of England, of Scotland, and the like, where the name is accepted by custom, the only Church I would recognise is no visible institution or society at all, but the whole number of those who, in their several ways, serve God, or have served him, the great multitude of those, living or dead, who, under whatever

name and whatever differences of creed, have worshipped Him and have lived their lives the better for doing so. *The Church*, is the Church Universal, which means all mankind on the religious side, not only Christians, but everybody else that has a religion able to bring him into communion with God. Of that Church all are already members who truly love God and their neighbour. And no Free Catholic, or Unitarian, or other Church, could do anything more for them. It is as individuals, separate souls, each answerable to God, and each more or less aware of His love, that they feel their fellowship with one another, and are members one of another. And it is along this line that the ideal of the brotherhood of man will be most nearly approached. To revive the idea of the Church in any narrower sense than that of the Church Universal and invisible is to go back, and not forward, it is to shrink from the higher ideal that is coming into sight, and to take refuge in the lower, which was once, but is not now, the best that could be seen. The ideal of individual fellowship is the harder, and that of church fellowship is the easier. Our congregations have seen the higher and the harder ideal, and, even if they have failed to reach it, to fail in the quest of the higher is nobler than to succeed in the easy attainment of the lower. But they have not failed altogether. And what is alleged to be their failure only appears as such when judged by a standard, *viz.*:—that of the church idea, which hitherto they have not recognised. To forsake the ideal which they have followed, and sink to the ideal of the Church is to take refuge in a crowd when each one ought to stand alone face to face with God. It is to refuse, on the plea of corporate life, the glorious liberty of the children of God; liberty not to seek the ends of self, but to be and to do one's best for all others, His children on earth.

That is the ideal for the individual. That is what the Roman Catholic has never seen, what the Protestant has learnt to see, and what now, with the breaking of the outer shell of Protestantism, is coming into full view. Let who will be satisfied with the Church, any Church, ancient or modern. Let those who have seen a higher and more glorious ideal be true to that, and work for that, and in the service of that lose neither heart nor hope. Let them be "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as they know that their labour is not in vain, in the Lord."—Amen.

THE Rev. Stopford A. Brooke's sermon at Rosslyn-hill Chapel, Hampstead, on Whit Sunday evening, was based upon Acts ii. 1, &c., and without discussing critical matters, went straight to the heart of the old story of the coming of the Spirit as with the sound of the rushing of a mighty wind and in flames of fire. Mr. Brooke is to preach at Rosslyn-hill each Sunday evening in June.

Be like the bird, that, halting in her flight
Awhile on boughs too slight,
Feels them give way beneath her, and yet
sings,
Knowing that she hath wings.

Victor Hugo.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

ANNUAL MEETING.

THE annual business meeting of the Association was held at Essex Hall on Wednesday afternoon, the President, Sir WILLIAM B. BOWRING, Bart., in the chair.

The report, which was presented by the Rev. W. Copeland Bowie, the secretary, gave a full account of the year's work under the heading of Home Mission, with a special section on the Van Mission, Publications, Colonial and Foreign Work, and Scotland, under the McQuaker Trust. It included a record of the International Meetings in Boston, Mass., last September, and noted the publication of the volume "Freedom and Fellowship in Religion," containing the papers and proceedings of the congress, and also reproduced the letter of greeting sent by the Association to the Unitarian Churches of Canada after the visit of its representatives to that country on the same occasion. A note of special interest referred to the proposed appointment of a missionary agent for Canada, through the co-operation of the American and British Associations, to be stationed at Winnipeg, and to devote his efforts to the great West. There was also record of the provincial meeting of the Association held in Liverpool last February. The obituary record included the name of Mr. Charles W. Jones, of Liverpool, who was President of the Association 1899-1900; of Professor Jean Réville, of Paris, an honoured foreign correspondent, and an ever welcome presence at our meetings; and a large number of other generous and loyal friends of the Association.

The section of the report on Publications opened with a reference to Dr. James Drummond's "Studies in Christian Doctrine" as the most important book issued during the year, and to the two volumes translated by the Rev. E. W. Lummis, Professor Wernle's "Sources of our Knowledge of the Life of Jesus," and the late Dr. Wrede's "Paul." Other publications were "Jesus as Rabbi, Messiah, Martyr," by the late Herbert Rix; the second series of Martineau's "Endeavours after the Christian Life" in the popular sixpenny edition (and also in cloth with a portrait), and in the same series "Religious Ideas," by W. J. Fox, with a biographical sketch. The new volume of Robert Collyer's sermons, under the title "Where the Light Dwelleth," with a portrait and biographical introduction by the Rev. C. Hargrove, to be published at Whitsuntide, was mentioned, and the book is out, as our readers already know. Coming volumes are two more translations by Mr. Lummis, from the series of *Religionsgeschichtliche Volksbücher*; "The Apostolic Age," by Professor von Dobschütz; and "The Religion of the Jews at the time of Jesus," by G. Hollmann; and also a translation of two valuable lectures by Professor F. Delitzsch, under the title "Whose Son is Christ?" As to finance, the accounts showed a balance of £897 in hand, but this was only due to the fact that there had been a doubt up to near the end of the year whether the subscriptions of others would be sufficient for the committee to be able to claim the anonymous subscription of £1,000, and the work in some branches

had not been pushed forward as it otherwise would have been; but, finally, several other generous friends of the Association came forward, and the additional income was secured. The total expenditure for the year was £8,313. The income included £4,642 in subscriptions, £585 in collections, and £1,323 from investments. Contributions to the Van Mission Fund amounted to £955, and sales of publications to £951. Grants to congregations and for special services amounted to £2,948, and grants in books and tracts to £548. On colonial and foreign work £981 was spent, £1,403 on publications, £139 on deputations (including America last September), and £1,083 on the Van Mission.

Mr. H. CHATFIELD CLARKE, the hon. treasurer, in presenting the accounts, called attention to the fact that the interest from investments provided for the whole working expenses of the Association, so that every penny now contributed went directly to mission work. He explained the large balance, and said that for the coming year the committee had determined to go forward with their work in all departments, confident that the necessary income would be contributed. There was, however, need for the most strenuous effort, for the anonymous subscription of £1,000 was now to be reduced to £500, and still the standard of giving must be maintained. Unfortunately for him, as treasurer, the five years' guarantee of greatly increased subscriptions had just come to an end, and they must therefore appeal for some £1,500 in fresh subscriptions for the coming year. That appeal they confidently made to the country for the maintenance of the work.

The PRESIDENT, in moving the adoption of the report and accounts, expressed his great interest in the Association and the satisfaction with which he had served his year of office, though he would gladly have done much more. He paid a warm tribute to the committee, and especially to the secretary, and said that in his judgment, as a business man, the work of the Association was thoroughly well managed and organised and enthusiastically carried out.

Mr. JESSE PILCHER, who seconded, said they could not look with indifference on such work as the Association was carrying out. He looked forward with much hopefulness to the results of the great effort of the Van Mission, and he was very glad that laymen were taking their part in the work. He hoped that work would be pushed forward to the uttermost, and would reach the masses of the people with the power of religion to lift them up to happier and holier life. To the extent of their courage, loyalty, and self-sacrifice he felt sure that the work would prosper. The resolution was unanimously adopted.

On the motion of Dr. W. BLAKE ODGERS, K.C., seconded by the Rev. W. G. TARRANT, the thanks of the Association were accorded to the President for his services during the year, and Mr. John Harrison was appointed President for the ensuing year. The committee and council were then appointed, new members of the committee being Mr. H. G. Chancellor, Rev. E. S. Hicks, Mr. R. P. Jones, and Mr. R. M. Montgomery, taking the places of Mr. John Harrison (now President), Mr. G. H. Leigh, Mr. Oswald Nettlefold, and the Rev. V. D. Davis.

The next resolution moved from the chair was:—

"That the Association extends its sympathy to the men and women who in all lands are striving to unite pure religion and perfect liberty; and welcomes the representatives of kindred religious organisations."

In this connection the Secretary reported a number of letters of greeting from friends in other countries, passages from which we hope to publish next week, and welcomed the presence at the meetings of the Rev. F. J. Gauld, of Leominster, Mass., representing the American Unitarian Association, and Mrs. Arthur Lord, of Plymouth, Mass., and the Rev. R. R. Shippen, formerly secretary of the A.U.A.; Dr. Krüger, the Essex Hall lecturer; the Hon. K. G. Gupta and Mrs. Gupta, representing the Brahmo Samaj of India; Mr. J. M. Geddis, of Wellington, New Zealand; and Dr. Baart de la Faille, of the Dutch Church in London, representing the Protestantbond of Holland.

The Rev. F. J. GAULD, in acknowledging the welcome, expressed the gratitude they felt in America for the visit of so many of their English brethren last year at the International Meetings. It had shown their fellow countrymen that Unitarianism was not merely a Yankee product of New England, great as its traditions there were, but was British also, and indeed part of a world-wide movement; that helped them to make it in America also not simply a New England but a national movement; and it had certainly drawn their two countries more closely together. He concluded by delivering a message of greeting from the American Unitarian Association, which he had brought straight from their anniversary meetings in Boston. The Association, at its eighty-third annual meeting, sent cordial feelings and God-speed to its sister Association, born in the same year and on the same day—the B. and F. U. A.: "Cherishing the same ideals of religious freedom and sincerity, love and service, the two Associations have laboured fraternally together for the Gospel of Christ and the kingdom of God on earth. Never were they more closely united in more mutual regard and for common service than at the present time; never was their faith more assured that their basic principles of freedom, fellowship, and character in religion are to become the universal and precious possession of mankind." And the Association entrusted to Mr. Gauld, one of their number, the transmission of this expression of their friendship and goodwill.

The representatives of District Associations were then cordially welcomed, and the Rev. R. Travers Herford was thanked for his sermon.

On the motion of the PRESIDENT, seconded by Mr. RICHARD ROBINSON, and supported by the Rev. H. Enfield Dowson, the following resolution was passed:—

"That this meeting heartily welcomes the endeavours now being made to promote temperance, peace, better housing, and improved conditions of labour; and, while rejoicing in the increasing interest of the Churches generally in the social and economic elevation of the masses of the people, urges upon Unitarians everywhere the duty of taking an active part in efforts to remove the social evils which all deplore."

Mr. ROBINSON, in seconding, said that it needed no speech of the President's when he moved such a resolution as that, for in all such efforts for social amelioration it might be said that Sir William Bowring's recommendation was written on the tables of the hearts of the people of Liverpool. It was a most welcome sign that the churches were now showing such interest in social questions, and he quoted a saying of Dr. Rauschenbusch in his "Christianity and the Social Crisis," that if a hundred good Samaritans had found wounded travellers on the road, they would surely have formed a vigilance society to stop the supply; on the same principle as that by which the doctor of a lunatic asylum tested the recovery of his patients, setting them to empty troughs into which taps of water were set to run. Only those were judged to be sane who turned off the taps. So they ought now to face the evil results of their social condition.

Mr. Dowson also rejoiced in the spirit of social enthusiasm now entering the churches, and pleaded that they themselves should be in the front. Not indeed to do such work on denominational lines, but their churches must inspire enthusiasm of humanity, and send out their members to march shoulder to shoulder with others under the banner of social reform.

The last resolution on the agenda was one of which notice had been given by a private member, the Rev. H. B. SMITH, of Mottram:—

"That any congregation making a yearly contribution to the funds of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association shall be entitled to send a delegate to its annual meeting, and such delegate shall in that character be a member of the Association."

This, it was pointed out, involved an alteration of the rules of the Association, and while the mover had given the notice required by rule, the members of the Association generally had not been informed of the proposal.

A letter was read from Dr. Carpenter and the Rev. Joseph Wood, stating that they had only that day heard that such a resolution was to be brought forward, and were unable to be present at the meeting. They urged that the consideration of the matter ought to be postponed, so that all members of the Association might have an opportunity of considering it before a decision was arrived at.

Mr. BODELL SMITH, on rising to move his resolution, said that considerable pressure had been brought to bear upon him to withdraw his motion, and he proposed to compromise in the interest of peace, and to move simply that the matter be referred to the committee for consideration and report to the next annual meeting of the Association. He stated his position, that where contribution was made there should be due representation, and that if an annual subscriber of a shilling was recognised as a member of the Association, a congregation holding an annual collection ought certainly to have the right to appoint delegates, with the status of full membership. He was anxious to increase the interest of the churches in the work of the Association, and make them feel that it was their own responsibility. He

moved his resolution in that sense, and it was seconded.

Dr. J. EDWIN ODGERS said that he was glad that Mr. Smith had taken so conciliatory a course. He was not one of those who lived in perpetual dread of the thin edge of wedges, but he certainly thought that in that resolution they had a piece of a wedge, and he reminded the meeting that at a famous annual meeting of that Association, some forty years ago, it had been decided after serious debate to abolish the principle of congregational representation in that propagandist society, and they had thought that the matter was settled once for all, that their open trust churches could not be represented by such a body, and that the Association should consist of individual members only.

The Rev. F. H. JONES also protested against the bringing forward of that motion, when the great majority of the members of the Association could know nothing about it. He did not want the matter referred to the committee; it should be considered by the members as a whole, after due notice.

After some further discussion and questions as to the rules, the resolution was passed as amended, and the matter is referred to the new committee.

MINISTERS ATTENDING THIS WEEK'S MEETINGS.

THE following ministers have been present during the week's meetings:—The Revs. W. Agar, F. Allen, H. Austin, J. C. Ballantyne, J. H. Belcher, W. Copeland Bowie, S. Burrows, J. Burton, W. T. Bushrod, Dr. J. E. Carpenter, G. Carter, A. A. Charlesworth, C. C. Coe, B. C. Constable, G. Cooper, G. C. Cressey, G. Critchley, R. N. Cross, E. Daplyn, R. Davis, V. D. Davis, Dr. James Drummond, T. Dunkerley, T. E. M. Edwards, John Ellis, D. J. Evans, R. P. Farley, S. Farrington, G. A. Ferguson, R. Finnerty, A. W. Fox, F. K. Freeston, C. A. Ginever, A. Golland, Henry Gow, T. Graham, C. A. Greaves, A. Hall, F. Hankinson, C. Hargrove, W. Harrison, C. Harvey-Cook, J. Harwood, R. T. Herford, E. S. Hicks, Rowland Hill, J. Hipperson, F. A. Homer, W. Holmshaw, J. Howard, A. Hum, F. H. Jones, J. F. Jones, R. J. Jones, W. J. Jupp, J. P. Kane, W. H. Lambelle, R. H. Lambley, G. Lansdown, W. Lindsay, H. M. Livens, H. McLachlan, J. E. Manning, A. J. Marchant, J. M. Mills, P. Moore, R. Newell, A. E. O'Connor, J. E. Odgers, J. C. Odgers, R. J. Orr, A. E. Parry, G. A. Payne, J. A. Pearson, A. G. Peaston, H. W. Perris, G. von Petzold, G. L. Phelps, C. E. Pike, W. J. Pond, W. W. C. Pope, P. Prime, R. S. Redfern, C. E. Reed, F. T. Reed, C. Roper, W. H. Rose, J. Ruddle, W. L. Schroeder, M. R. Scott, W. R. Shanks, A. H. Shelley, H. F. Short, A. Cobden Smith, H. Bodell Smith, T. P. Spedding, W. Stoddart, C. J. Street, S. H. Street, J. E. Stronge, F. Summers, A. Sutcliffe, W. G. Tarrant, L. Tavener, H. S. Tayler, F. Taylor, A. H. Thomas, E. L. H. Thomas, J. Toye, W. J. B. Tranter, C. Travers, W. L. Tucker, G. H. Vance, F. H. Vaughan, E. A. Voysey, A. Webster, W. Whitaker, J. M. Whiteman, W. E. Williams, J. Wood, W. Wooding, J. Worthington, I. Wrigley.

THE CHANGING SOCIAL BASE AND THE FUTURE OF OUR CHURCHES.*

BY THE REV. W. WHITAKER, B.A.

THERE is a way of speaking about the coming of social change and its effect on the prospects of the Churches which I want to try to avoid. The view is sometimes held that the Churches and religion itself have now to reckon with certain grave unsettlements in the outside world which cannot but have far-reaching consequences for all ecclesiastical conditions, and that we must just make the best of this impact upon us of alien forces and secular change. In contradistinction to such a view, I wish to assume that the changes that are now upon us are as much in religion itself as in politics and social life. In fact, so far from being a reaction of social forces upon religion, they are produced as much by religion as by social forces. We have to do with one of those grand *general* movements of the human mind that cannot be said to take their rise in any particular department of man's activity, but belong to the whole sweep and trend of an age. The revolution that is proceeding is not primarily political; it is nothing else than a comprehensive uplift and advance of the total human situation. It is not something that we dread as Churchmen while we hail it as social reformers. It is felt everywhere; it begins everywhere. The Churches are stirred to the depths by it, and, when they recognise its tremendous appeal, they feel that they are receiving a revelation at first hand, and not merely harkening to the borrowed echo of voices that have first stirred the world outside. There is, of course, no need to labour this point before the present audience, for we are committed through and through to development and progress in religion. We expect that our Churches in the future will give their own interpretation of the main movements of mind and society in the world at large. Instead of timidly waiting to see how the crowd will vote, or how parties will evolve, our Churches will be fitted by their free and untrammelled outlook to take advantage of the new social insight of our time and interpret it in its deeper spiritual bearings. The social base is slowly but surely changing. All kinds of readjustments affecting property, and class, and citizenship, and life, and labour, and trade, and the family, are now coming perceptibly into view. It will be the business of a really Free Church, not to wait for instruction from the outside, shaping its gospel by some new fashion in economics, but already leaping to the front and anticipating, through swift instincts of love, the larger meanings of life which have to be slowly and painfully worked out afterwards in details of work and wages, in terms of the market and the law, in the rearrangements of status and social balance. This, then, is the first point I want to make. Religion, it cannot be too often repeated, is not some odd and mysterious by-path of mental exertion. It is when men's hearts and hopes beat high with any larger widening of the world's life and opportunity, any new freeing of human capabilities in general,

that religion gets its chance to sway an age.

And such a time seems now to be upon us. Earnest religious men who watch the skies for the signs of the times are to-day full of the brooding problem: What and when is the next great Revival of Religion to be? A study of the great revivals of the past would, I believe, show us that in every case there has been in the world at large some deep quickening and opening out of human faculty. Take the three great modern revivals—the Protestant Reformation, the rise of Methodism, and the Oxford Movement. Who can pretend that our historians have even yet exhausted the significance of that upbursting from the depths of all things human that we call the Reformation? It is by no mere fanciful juxtaposition that we relate it to the New Birth of European intellect and culture. What in religion was called "Justification by Faith" meant that in the world at large Reason had once more come into its own, that Conscience had revolted against Casuistry, and the Man against the Priest, that law and science and politics were revolutionised. With regard to the Methodist revival (which is still, in spite of all that has happened since, the most potent of all our recent fountain-heads of spiritual life), it is sometimes said that it had no intellectual significance—it was a mere episode in the history of pietism. I cannot agree. As John Richard Green tells us, "There was a change in the temper of England that was to influence from that time to this its social and political history. New forces, new cravings, new aims, which had been silently gathering beneath the crust of action, burst suddenly into view." Read again Green's description of the religious and moral scepticism of the time just before the advent of Methodism, and you can scarcely fail to be struck by many resemblances and correspondences with our own age. The Methodist awakening was but the religious side to the great social discovery of that period—the discovery of the infinite value of every separate human personality. Every man, it said, must hear the Gospel, for every man had a soul to be saved. This was the Arminianism that fired Wesley and left Calvinists like Toplady and Whitefield outside the main work of evangelising England. It was the religious expression of the new-found principle of democracy—democracy regarded as resting in a multitude of self-contained individualities. There were no exclusive elect; there was free grace for all. It is not difficult to understand how this politico-religious discovery sent Howard into the prisons and Wesley into every town and parish of England, and missionaries all over the world, and abolished slavery, and founded popular education. In a word, the religious movement was only one aspect of a deep elemental change that had come over men's whole attitude towards life and the world. In everything that is vital to the human spirit, deep answers unto deep; the forces that move politics and social life join hands under the surface with religious and moral evolution.

It was not otherwise with that third great upheaval, less potent and universal, but still most significant, which has only

* A paper read at the Conference of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, at Essex Hall, on Thursday morning, June 11.

just ceased to influence English life. The lesson is the same. The religious impulse came along with a powerful gathering of literary and social and imaginative forces—a new poetry, a new art, a new Church music, the Gothic revival, the re-discovery of the thirteenth century, and, above all, the predominant note of the nineteenth century, the feeling for history, the feeling for the solidarity of man throughout the significant ages of man's story. There is no wonder that, with all this splendour, Neo-Catholicism made the Protestant candle burn a sickly, yellow flame. But, at any rate, the lesson is clear: the life that lifts Churches is the life that lifts whole peoples.

And what next? Can there be any question that our own time has its own message, its own new synthesis, its own gathering up and secret preparation of forces that will one day burst out into clear strong consciousness? There is to-day the same confident scepticism in many places that marked the quarter of a century immediately preceding the rise of Methodism. There is the same sense of abrupt break with the past that men experienced at the time of the Protestant Reformation. There is the same sickening disquiet and conviction of hollowness in the prevailing forms of religion and Church methods that fired Keble to his denunciation of "National Apostasy" and drove Newman into magnificent rebellion. Our own age, too, has its discovery. If the eighteenth century was the age of Individualism, if the nineteenth century was the Historical century, the twentieth bids fair to be the Social century. We are re-discovering the social consciousness. The very fact of Society itself is acquiring for us a wonderful new meaning. If we may hazard an attempt to summarise the whole great change of face that is taking place, we see Society becoming conscious of itself, acting no longer under the compulsion of blind forces, but resolutely taking hold of its destiny with both hands and rising to a sense of its being a living whole. The play of what are called economic forces is no longer accepted as a foregone and determined fatalism, or as a system of "natural law." Economic forces, like other forces, must be managed and rationalised. Instead of anarchy there is to be organisation; instead of individual caprice there is to be collectivism; instead of warfare there is to be co-operation. Labour is to be the basis of civil society, and no prescriptive right or hereditary holding which contravenes this principle is to stand. It is not, indeed, that there have never been social facts or social theories in the world before. But we may fairly claim that it has been reserved for this age to show the social whole insisting on itself, insisting on its right and duty to act for itself and work out its own meanings; not leaving the welfare of the whole to be more or less clumsily gambled with by the warring units that make up society, but aiming at an ordered, reasoned, collective advance. There have always been social institutions—institutions such as property and inheritance and government. But the new social spirit says that every institution must be criticised in the light of its social purpose. Institutions are made for man, not man for institutions.

Every individual claim must be carried up into the social ideal. The social whole must be as clear in its self-consciousness as the individual has been clear. And only so can the individual truly realise himself.

There is no need to emphasise the epoch-making character of this new spirit. It adds enormously to the stock of man's spiritual conceptions. The eighteenth century saw the rise of a new sense of the personal value and dignity of the individual self, and Methodism grew out of this. The twentieth century sees emerging into view another great addition to the kingdom of human ends. Can anyone doubt that the enrichment is at least as stirring and hope-inspiring in the latter case as in the former? Does it require any extraordinary prophetic vision in the members of our Free Churches to find a religious significance in this new conception? My own fear is rather that we may think these matters so commonplace or so secular, that we shall fail to recognise in them the real substance and subject matter out of which the religious spirit of the future will fashion its most powerful utterance. Let us therefore take a few illustrations in detail of the working of the new spirit in the faith and practice of our free churches.

In the first place, here is the dawn of a new optimism. We have had so many sad poets, so much tired art, such dismal scientific forecasts of the future of the race, such dying-down of ideals and enthusiasm in politicians, that the world has been badly in need of new springs of hope. Religion has shared the prevailing depression, learning in these latter days to take a somewhat pale and Stoical hue, and trying to thank whatever gods there be for its unconquerable soul. But at last the long lane has come to a turning. Once more the dormant energies of the spirit of man bestir themselves. Long sleeps the summer in the seed, but at last a new territory is added to the kingdom of man. In the discovery that society holds its destiny in its own hands is just the warrant for believing that we can rebuild the shattered universe of our hopes nearer to our heart's desire. Poverty shall vanish. The hell-holes of our modern cities shall be cleaned out. The whole impossible vision of Christ of the kingdom shall come true, and man be liker man through all the season of the golden year. Now, is there any religious man who, along with all this, will have no deeper glimpses of the essential Good of the universe? When we have seen evil to be no longer "necessary" evil, when we have grappled with, and thrown, monsters which ages of unbelief have blasphemously attributed to the Will of God, will our Theism remain the poor halting thing it is at present? Nay, it will be because some outcasts from all the churches have believed more profoundly in the essential God than any of the Churches that these things will have come about. The Free Churches will be very dull if they can find no hint here of a fuller gospel and a more confident message. It is enough to remake and re-start the whole preaching of religion.

And a second point allied to this, which I will only glance at, is that the new spirit will remodel the Theistic argument—the reasons for believing in

God and a God-governed world. If anyone thinks the auguries are against it, let him remember that just before the evangelisation of England by Methodism, Montesquieu was in this country and reported that in the higher circles "everyone laughs if one talks of religion." In the same way, Robert Blatchford and Haecke may very well prelude a great uprising of faith in no wise dreamt of in their philosophy. But the great strength of the Theistic argument of the future will be in a new reading of man. What Professor Caldecott, in his enumeration of Theistic arguments, has called "Social Theism" will bulk ever more largely in our theological treatises. It will not be so difficult for men to believe in God, for they will see Him embodying Himself in His kingdom among men; when the holy city, the new Jerusalem, comes down from God out of heaven, He will dwell with them and be their God. The root of Theistic belief has always been the self-revelation of God in humanity. As humanity comes to know itself and its real powers, the revelation will grow. But, in the next place, there is a corollary to all this: if the Social spirit implies a social religion, a social religion implies a Church. The new spirit that is carrying everything before it demands, above and before all other things, a Church. It demands it even more than higher wages, or land nationalisation, or a municipal milk supply. The Free Churches in particular are fast coming to realise their need of a true Church consciousness.

Dr. Percy Gardner has well said: "Individualism carried to extremes has been the bane of Protestant countries. In them the rights of the individual conscience, the free and separate standing of every man in the sight of God, has been dwelt on to the exclusion of all besides. The great and original Christian idea of a kingdom of God has been lost sight of." Well, our Free Churches must find it again. They simply cannot stand or continue to exert any useful influence unless they are willing to get them a new heart and a new temper in this matter. If, while all the world beside is learning the new lesson of co-operation; while agricultural labourers are learning how to work and buy and sell in association; while trade disputes are more and more coming to be settled by collective bargaining; while Sir John Brunner is talking of nationalising the railways and mines and canals; while France and Germany and England are consenting to subordinate their independent views to a common-sense of Europe—if amidst all this our churches persist in jealous isolation because they are suspicious that some disordered intellect who has a genius for organisation will lay cruel hands upon their petty liberties and overcome a whole denomination, well then, they must go the way of all effete cults and obsolete shrines. But I have a strong faith in their power to learn. Already we have some semblance of representative government, both by means of this Association and through the National Conference. It ought not to be an insuperably difficult task to find out the best way of co-ordinating these somewhat naive attempts at organisation. We have to find out how to express the new social religion of the time in the forms and activities of our denominational institutions. For one thing, there is the question

of Church membership and officership. We have to retain whatever is wise and fine in the old domination of the congregations by men of money and social standing. We have at the same time to put an end to the money basis of church membership and church leadership. This is a problem; but it has to be solved. No mere mechanical rules or manipulation of voting powers will solve it. Neither counting of heads nor counting of pew rents is a sure specific for congregational health. On the one hand, the masses of men are less and less willing to enter our churches on the old terms. Rightly or wrongly, our church arrangements seem to them the last refuge of class distinctions and self-worshipping respectability. On the other hand, when this difficulty is not felt, it is a complaint of those who have to see to the maintenance of churches and church funds, that the democracy does not pay. Ready to assert itself and its new-found importance, it forgets that the classes which have formerly ruled have, at any rate, borne the obligations of their position and prestige. Now I have no patent method of meeting this situation. No re-arrangement of subscription sheets, however ingenious, will meet it. The old system of Church maintenance did very well for an old idea of the Church which has passed away. If a new system is to arise it will have to be the outcome of a new church idea. This, surely is the real bottom fact of the matter. If men feel the church to be worth while, they will, sooner or later, find ways of supporting it. The one question is whether there is in existence a church-consciousness. If the church is a more or less negligible quantity in our social life; if it is not even held to be an absolute necessity in our religious life—then it will cease. The new spirit, on the other hand, believes in the Church as much as it believes in God. In the timely and brave words of Dr. J. H. Crooker on this matter: "Without the Church religion can no more thrive in a community than education without schools. Piety needs symbol and service to foster it, as much as culture needs books." If Dr. Crooker's words could have rung out in warning thirty years ago to our churches, we might not now be having to make up so much lost time. We have lent ourselves to other teaching than this, more plausible and more palatable to the crowd, as, for example, the foolishness of declaring that "the great use of the Church is to help men to do without it." This kind of thing has done incalculable harm. We might have been saved from it by a deeper understanding of common Christianity. But there is no use in talking of it now as if it were a matter for mere doctrinal investigation, for we are all going to be brought speedily to the test of actual experience, and in the near future those churches will come well and strongly out of the ordeal which are able to weld men into a social whole for the purposes of religion. This is what really lies under all difficulties of money and maintenance and management. This is what the troubles and perplexities about the selection of ministers really turn upon. Get your church-consciousness and you can have a church, not otherwise.

And how is this to be obtained? That is, no doubt the crucial point of the whole subject, and I have no wish to hide from you my conviction that our

churches must make up their minds, in a way they have never yet done, on their relation to the true sources and motives of Christian enthusiasm. The church is a quite definite and peculiar institution. It is not any meeting of persons, for any purpose, under any auspices. It is the company of a certain man's disciples; it exists to preserve and communicate the spirit of that particular man; it meets, and moves, and redeems and saves, under the auspices of Jesus Christ. It makes men feel that they belong together because they belong to *him*. It builds itself upon the most marvellous fact of human history, which is too good not to be true, the fact of a human love that had the perfectness of God in it; the fact of a human goodness that set all the other magnetic forces of the world's goodness radiating along the lines of his own supreme personality. The Church is the tradition of this. The Church is Christ's sacrifice endlessly repeated. It is the communion of Christ made into common bread. It is his Cross for ever lifted up. It is his Life in perpetual Resurrection. All who belong to it die with him and for him, redeem with him, and through him. This is the social consciousness realised, and realised at its best and its deepest. So society finds its last warrant as well as its clearest interpretation, in the Church—the Church of Christ. Properly speaking there is no other Church, for no other religion has created a Church. Outside of him other bodies are only called churches by a natural imitation, and the institution is unique, as, indeed, it must be if he was unique. And in this uniqueness is the dynamic you seek. It is no mere theory. It is the verdict of many ages. He, if he be lifted up, will draw all men unto him. It will not be the least of the trophies that the ages have yielded to the Lord Christ, when the rediscovery and rebirth of the social consciousness of our age leads men to feel that union with him is a necessity of their being. Dr. Martineau has said: "A religion in ceasing to be historical, loses its best hope of becoming social." In Christ we have the historical justification of the Church's existence. In the Church we have the social fulfilment of Christ.

Descending from these high matters, there is one point that cannot be passed over, for it is vitally related to the guarding of the Christian tradition. It is our relation to other Christian churches. If a church is merely a loose collection or club of any kind of religious thinkers, gathered merely according to the accidents of locality and private preferences, then there will be among us no eager longing to belong to a great united Church of Christ. If, on the other hand, we are conscious of spiritual bonds that weave our hearts' deepest instincts into the very warp and woof of Catholic experience; if we know that in spite of all differences of dialect and shadings of thought we are actually one in Christ; then our division from the rest of his brethren will be no mere casual circumstance, but a standing burden and dis-ease. Reunion is out of the question at present. But efforts at mutual understanding and co-operation ought not to be. Some *modus vivendi* at least ought to be possible. But who is to begin it? We must begin it, and we must never leave off trying. The

spirit that we call social, the spirit of collective action and a common life, will drive us more and more on this track, towards co-ordination and comprehensive Christian community. When the democracy is fully grown and conscious of itself it will leave our sectarianisms high and dry as the last dishonoured relics and wrecks of individualism in religion. The conception of English religion as normally divided into a number of denominations, is often taken by middle class people to be a kind of fundamental presupposition of modern life, something in the nature of things, one of the rights of man being unlimited freedom to split and disagree in any desired direction. However that may be, it is fairly certain that the democracy is not going to be a middle-class democracy, and the progress and culture to which we are helping the people will assuredly *not* consist in copying middle-class notions and tastes and modes of life. The mere vastness and magnitude of those classes of the people which are going to obtain their economic emancipation, will compel them to arrange their lives on a very different plan from that of the present servant-keeping classes. Industrialism will take the place of commercialism and give the tone to society. The stolid, and in many ways admirable commercialism that is accountable for some of the virtues and many of the deficiencies of our middle classes is under the necessity of di-appearing as the social base gradually changes. Industrialism is essentially different from commercialism. The old order changes, and together with the passing of British commercialism the ideals of British Nonconformity must also suffer a sea change into something rich and strange. The word for the future, then, in this matter of inter-denominational relations, is, "Sirs, ye are brethren."

And, finally, there is the solemn and decisive question that lurks behind and underneath all the others: Will human nature be equal to the change? It is often urged as an objection, both against proposed changes in the State, and against inevitable changes in the Church, that humanity is not noble enough, and the instincts of our frail nature will not stand the strain. It is often said to those who are charged with dreaming idle dreams for the future, that all these things could be, but only on one condition: that there is present a powerful religious motive. Any amount of economic change is then supposed to be feasible; but without some such extraordinary religious sanction there is not much prospect of an essential improvement in the human lot. It appears to me that this view, when carefully examined, will produce two most important considerations, and both of them tell most powerfully for the social idea of the church. The first is that the coming democracy will be under the absolute necessity of possessing a religion, because the ends for which it works will be largely ends out of sight—distant improvements often not to be realised in the life-time of those who work for them. The work of building a noble and stable social order will for ever, as in the past, depend on the self-sacrifice, the patience, the heroism of men and women who cannot expect to see the fruit of their labours, much less enjoy it for themselves. Needless to say this means faith in the Unseen, trust in a larger Providence than man's, reverence for ideals

and obedience to impulses that do not pay in current coin. To this extent our objectors are right when they urge that a religious motive is a necessity. But, secondly, they are wrong when they leap to the further assumption that the future condition of developed society will be *more* in need of such motives and sanctions than the past has been; that a great betterment of society and of the Church can only come when we evolve a race of saints. The assumption, obviously, is that the old order of society was so rigorously coerced and policed that people could be kept within bounds and held to their duty without much religion. That is seen to be absurd as soon as stated. Every stage of evolving society has had its appropriate kind of religion. And the future, too, will have its religion, but instead of being more difficult it will be less so than the old, for it will be at every point rational. The old religion had to keep men to the service of institutions whose social purpose was only very remotely felt. The burdens and claims that were laid upon men's consciences and sense of duty were often, apparently, irrational; and in any case the obedience of the multitude to property laws could only be an unreasoned obedience, a kind of routine and unintelligible worship paid to what looked like a fetish, even when it was not so. It was often necessary to exact reverence for the unworthy priest, respect for the property of the idler, homage to the sensual noble. Terribly strong must have been the moral and religious sanctions adequate to this requirement. But the dictates of the new religion, the new morals, the new social order will bear their *raison d'être* on their surface. Their sanctions will not be adventitious, their root will not be in superstition. They will grow out of the needs of brotherhood. They will be the dues paid by brother to brother, by worker to worker, by man to humanity. In that day religion will be the most natural, the most frequent suggestion of our daily routine. Children will breathe it in with the common air; when they are grown up their environment will not give it the lie. It will be "one with the blowing clover and falling rain."

So my conclusion is that we live in a great day for the prospects of religion. We are in a fair way for reaping bigger things than we have ever sown. We are borne forward on one of the greater tidal waves of history. It is courage that is asked of us.

Our life is but a little holding, lent
To do a mighty labour

Else die we with the sun.

SOME very excellent people tell you they dare not hope. To me it seems much more impious to despair.—*Sydney Smith*.

As a look will reveal what no word can ever speak, so will a scent, a sound, the spring's warm breath, the green unravelling of the larch-bough, a sudden whisper in the summer leaves, the birds' clear song at early morning, bring our souls into contact with the illimitable, telling us that we are one with ourselves, with nature, and with God. These things have power to call forth a music within us, which has not yet had words set to it.—*Dora Greenwell*.

MATTHEW CAFFYN AND CHURCH DISCIPLINE.—II.

WE have seen that Haines was "withdrawn from" by the church because he persisted in seeking a patent by which it was thought he would engross the profits of threshing and selling trefoil seeds. What did the sentence of excommunication from a church of "baptized believers" involve? The member "withdrawn from" was excluded from participation in the Lord's Supper, and was deprived of the friendly fellowship and kindly hospitality of those with whom he had been closely associated in the church; but in civil affairs the excommunicated person was not to be avoided. This may not appear much to us, but the substitution of a feeling of restraint and aversion where there had formerly been a cordial brotherly intercourse was hard to bear, and was often sufficient to bring about repentance and a happy amendment and readmission to church fellowship. In the case of Richard Haines, however, while he was not so unconcerned in the doings of his church as to be indifferent to its censure; yet he was in no repentant mood and smarted under a sense of injury. He began to prepare a statement of his case for the press, and read part of it to a friend, who tried to persuade him to first submit the matter "to some neighbour congregation" according to the usual plan. In stating the grounds of his refusal of this course Haines gives involuntary testimony to the regard and esteem in which Caffyn was held, "considering," he says, "that all or most of the congregations near were in some respect inferior to him, and he much adored and esteemed by many of them I did utterly refuse so to do."

Haines, on his part, proposed a reference of the case to some London ministers. In his statement he tries to make it appear that this was a reference to the General Assembly. It was nothing of the sort. As Caffyn says, it "was no more than that some few friends at London . . . willing to make an assay for peace . . . did appoint to meet at a Coffey House, and this without the least advice or consent from us." Caffyn in response to a letter from a friend was ill advised enough to attend this private conference. Haines had consulted "an Elder" about this meeting "who thought it not unfit that such of the Nation as I thought meet might be present at the hearing of the Cause notwithstanding they were not in Fellowship." They advised Caffyn "to go home and call the congregation together and reform the matter." But his congregation would not recognise the authority of this scratch meeting. "As for those London friends," they said "we do not own them." So the matter was brought forward in 1674 at the regular General Assembly, the recognised authority in the General Baptist Churches. There was, however, a long standing agreement that the Assembly should not interfere in a dispute between an individual member and his congregation before the case had been referred to "the quarterly meeting in the country" or some "neighbour congregation," and though both Thomas Monck and Matthew Caffyn suggested ways of dealing with the case, the Assembly would not touch it.

Then Haines went to press with his statement of the case in which he formally appeals to the Assembly of May 20 and 21, 1675, to take up the matter. His pamphlet is entitled "New Lords, New Laws, or a discovery of a grand usurpation . . . lately practised by the Lordly Matthew Caffyn, a pretended true Apostle of our Blessed Lord and Saviour and Ruling Head of his congregation, usually meeting at Southwater, near Horsham, in Sussex." It is written with strong feeling against Caffyn using the term "apostle" rather than "messenger" to excite prejudice and calling him in scorn "infallible apostle," and "the idol of Southwater," and comparing him with "the Antichristian Beast." Haines had been a member of this church for several years, and he tries to rake up anything that might bring odium upon Caffyn. His charges do not amount to much, and it is clear that if nothing worse than this could be found the discipline in Caffyn's church had been exercised wisely on the whole, and with Christian temper and forbearance. In the General Baptist churches it was not the Elders, but the whole church with the Elders who exercised discipline. Haines also seeks to import some prejudice into the matter by reflecting on the opinions of Caffyn in reference to marriage with non-members and his views on the person of Christ. On this point Caffyn had to face a strong opposition led by Thomas Monck at this very time. He had two troubles at once, but we do not propose to touch on his religious beliefs in this article.

Caffyn and his church replied to Haines with a pamphlet entitled, "Envy's Bitterness corrected with the rod of Shame," 1674, in which the points at issue are dealt with in a calm and temperate way, and the action of the church is vindicated. When the Assembly met in 1675 Haines "appeared, with urgency not common, for a hearing of the matter." After some debate his request for a hearing was granted, "though so to do crossed the method of proceeding that formerly they had agreed upon." The case went against him, "the matter was examined, judged, and determined, and their result recorded, the which when R. H. had perused he in the face of the Assembly told them that he contemned what they had done."

Haines again turned to the press with "A Protestation against Usurpation," in which he inveighed against Caffyn and his church as "Papistical Baptists," and made the "malicious suggestion" that their "practise tends to the infringing the lawful power of the supreme Magistrate."

Caffyn rejoined with a pamphlet, published in 1675 by Francis Smith, the publisher of many General Baptist works, bearing the title, "A Raging Wave Foming (*sic*) out his own Shame," in which, with admirable temper, he recounts the steps of this case, and justifies the action of himself and his church. In this work he speaks of his congregation as "the church at Southwater." We learn from a passage in "Envy's Bitterness" that it had two deacons indicated by the initials S. L. and D. P.

Haines continued to agitate his case with great pertinacity. At length he had appealed to a country congregation, though

he calls it "an unjust and crooked course." We hear of one meeting of the Assembly, on dealing with his case, breaking up in confusion. Haines published in 1680 "An Appeal to the General Assembly of Baptists," which was to meet on June 3 in that year. I have not seen this publication, but it is quoted in the "Memoir of Richard Haines," by C. R. Haines, issued in 1899. By this time the original case of excommunication for persisting in securing a patent for threshing trefoil and refusal to listen to admonition by the church was obscured by side issues. Haines himself had been drawn into fellowship with the "particular baptists," and associated with William Kiffen and Thomas Hickes who had little sympathy with the "general baptists." He was attracted by the independent order of their church government. At the assembly of 1680 he made the extraordinary demand that the "Caffinite" members of the assembly should be removed and not allowed to adjudicate in his case. He put in a printed paper with the charge against Caffyn in these terms:—

(1) That Matthew Caffin of Broad-bridge near Horsham, in Sussex, has contemned the laws and prerogative of the King and threatens to excommunicate those who stand up for them.

(2) That he has excommunicated a Protestant and Liege Subject of the realm for no transgression of any human law.

(3) That his principles, tenets, and government are dangerous to the State, unjust and cruel to individuals.

Haines had the effrontery to tell the Assembly that unless they would "now reverse Caffyn's acts and admonish his abettors," he would himself indict them in the Crown Office. The Assembly weakly yielded to this threat. In explanation of their action, it must be stated that there was by this time a strong party in the Assembly bitterly hostile to Caffyn on account of his belief that Christ did not take his flesh of the Virgin Mary. Moreover, the political outlook for dissenters at that time was very black. It was the beginning of a recrudescence of bitter persecution, and Caffyn's statement that in exercising church discipline in moral and spiritual affairs "the statutes of the realm were nothing to them," was capable of malicious misinterpretation. The Assembly, "blaming Haines only for his hard words used of Caffyn," reversed the excommunication and ordered Caffyn to rescind it. There was some talk of the Assembly only being able to give advice and the churches being independent, but Caffyn would not avail himself of that subterfuge. He was ever loyal to the religious body that he served, and clearly saw that if the formal resolutions of the Assembly were ignored it would weaken its power and usefulness, and make of them, in the homely phrase of Haines, "ropes of sand." Caffyn promised to carry out the resolution of the Assembly, and no doubt this was done, but as the earlier church books of our Horsham congregation are lost no record of the fact remains.

As for Haines, he removed from his old home at West Wantley, in the parish of Sullington, Sussex, to London, and prospered in the world. He came into touch with the Unitarian philanthropist, Thomas Firmin, through a common interest in efforts to help the poor. Haines was fertile in suggestions for erecting work-houses and hospitals in each county for the purpose of training and employing the poor in linen and cloth weaving, and published pamphlets on the subject. He continued to exercise his inventive faculty in various directions; for example, in 1684 he wrote "Aphorisms upon the new way of improving cyder or making Cyder Royal with certain expedients concerning raising and planting of apple trees, gooseberry trees, &c." I take it that he entered into fellowship with the Anabaptists about the year 1658. His second son Gregory, born in March, 1659, was not baptized in infancy, but reverting to the Anglican church in manhood was baptised at Storrington in 1703. Haines died in 1686, but Caffyn, in spite of a dream by Haines, foreshadowing an early removal, lived to a green old age, dying in 1714, respected by his neighbours and beloved by his flock. A perusal of Caffyn's tracts in this controversy confirms our impression that he was more at home and more convincing as a disputant and a preacher than as a writer, and that he was wise enough to know it.

WALTER H. BURGESS.

THE CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

"And Nature, the old Nurse, took
The child upon her knee,
Saying, "Here is a story book
Thy Father hath written for thee."

THE great story-book lies always wide open, and its stories are about this beautiful world.

I do not think that any boy or girl would like to be classed with the boy in the old story, who saw nothing at all to interest or please him, on the very same ramble from which another boy returned with so much to tell of the beautiful things that he had noticed.

But some of us pass by, with but little heed, without pleasure, the beautiful things around us in the world, often very close to us. I feel sure that we can none of us, old or young, afford to do this; we cannot afford to lose from our lives, from our remembrance, the beautiful things in nature.

I liked the spirit of the man I heard say, as he looked back, on his way up from one of the lovely Devonshire combs, hung with the richest greenery from the edge of the cliff, down to the rocks and blue sea below: "The Lord has not left Himself without a witness here." Some of us possibly may never be able to read in far-off countries the stories of nature; we may never sail among the coral islands, brilliant with different tints of colour, in the sunny waters of the South Pacific Ocean.

We may, some of us, never stand in the grand Yosemite Valley, on the American

Continent, with its steep granite sides, over one of the ledges of which the great fall leaps from an immense height. The giant trees, the beautiful wellingtonias are growing in the famous valley, their trunks so large that, if an arch were cut in one of them, a horse and wagon could easily pass through. But there is much about our own country in the great book of nature, its pleasant country-sides, its hills and valleys, its long, beautiful coastline. And close at home are stories full of wonder and delight.

Do you sometimes stop to read the old sunset story, somewhat differently told each evening, at one time a flaming red sun, at another, a golden sun, with cloud-islands scattered round it, all touched with the glory of the sunset light?

Do you know the story of the little wood that is somewhere not far, perhaps, from where you live? Do you know something about the many snug homes made amongst its bracken and trees? Do you know the squirrel's story, and the owl's story?

Do you know the story of the rockpool, which, in climbing over the weed-covered rocks, at the seaside you so often jump across? If you look into the rockpool, one not far from the water's edge, when the sun is shining upon it, the pretty picture you will see partly tells its story. You would like to know more about those brilliant sea-anemones which, in company with many other curious and beautiful creatures, are sunning themselves amongst the green weed, but I am not going to tell you these stories; the old Nurse Nature can tell them far better than I can, and many another story too, if you will spend a part of your leisure time with her, laying up for yourselves the while a store of recollections of the beautiful things in the world. And watching the habits and likings of God's creatures that share with you this pleasant earth.

And if you delight in beautiful things in Nature, you will wish to guard them from all harm, as you would guard some treasure in your own cabinet, which, for its beauty, you greatly value. You will like to see the gay butterflies and happy birds enjoying the summer sunshine, joyful and free. The trees and plants you will wish to save from all injury, so that they may again next year give the same pleasure to their spreading boughs and sweet blossoms.

As "the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful" led to the Jewish sanctuary, even to the Holy of Holies, so the love of all that is beautiful in Nature will lead you nearer to God.

"He only is the Maker
Of all things near and far;
He paints the wayside flower,
He lights the evening star:
The winds and waves obey Him,
By Him the birds are fed;
Much more to us His children,
He gives our daily bread.
All good gifts around us
Are sent from heaven above;
Then thank the Lord, O thank
the Lord
For all His love!"

ALICE HINCKS.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents. LETTERS CANNOT BE INSERTED WITHOUT THE WRITER'S NAME, and all private information should be accompanied by the name and address of the senders.]

A COMMENT IN PROTEST.

SIR,—Permit me, in the interest of future occasions, to comment on a blot on the proceedings at Little Portland-street on Wednesday. It is impossible that every member of a crowded congregation should arrive exactly at the time appointed. It is better to be too early than too late: the church should be open long before the hour for service, for shelter, for meeting and greeting of friends, and with a welcome to strangers, who are quick to appreciate kindness and easily repelled by discourtesy. Great superfluous zeal was displayed later in endeavouring to clear the steps into the street—as if for the King or a fire engine. Such a spirit would chivy from the very ladder of heaven the ascending and descending angels!

“A word to the wise is sufficient.”

June 11.

EDITH GITTINS.

WILLASTON SCHOOL.

SIR,—May I be allowed to draw the attention of my brother ministers to the advertisement, appearing in this issue, of the scholarship tenable by sons of ministers at Willaston School, founded by Mr. Sydney Jones in memory of his father, the late Mr. Charles W. Jones, of Liverpool? The Governors earnestly hope that by means of such scholarships as the above, and another previously endowed by an anonymous founder, many sons of our ministers may become Willaston boys, who otherwise would have been unable to take advantage of the opportunity offered by this school.

H. ENFIELD DOWSON,

Chairman of the Governors.

Gee Cross, Hyde.

June 10, 1908.

UNITARIAN VAN MISSION.

THE meetings of the week have again been wonderfully successful from the point of view of attendance. Some extracts from the missionaries' reports will appear in our next issue.

DETAILS OF THE MEETINGS.

LONDON DISTRICT.—Ilford, June 1 to 7, five meetings, attendance 1,600.

MANCHESTER DISTRICT.—Congleton, June 1 to 3, three meetings, attendance 630; Burslem, June 4 to 7, four meetings, 1,800.

SOUTH WALES DISTRICT.—Cardiff, June 1 to 3, three meetings, 1,500; Barry Dock, June 4 to 7, three meetings, 800.

GLASGOW DISTRICT.—Baillieston, June 1, 800; Coatbridge, June 2 to 7, four meetings, 2,600. Totals, June 1 to 7, 23 meetings, attendance 9,830, average 427.

THOS. P. SPEDDING,

Missionary Agent.

ASSOCIATION OF IRISH NONSUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIANS AND OTHER FREE CHRISTIANS.—The ninth annual conference of Sunday School Teachers and others interested in the religious training of the young, was held in the old Presbyterian Church, Larne, on Saturday, June 6. The Rev. W. H. Drummond, President of the Association, was in the chair, and there was an attendance of from 450 to 500, a large contingent being from Belfast.

The meeting opened with a hymn and prayer, offered by the Rev. James Kennedy, of Larne, after which the Rev. Eustace Thompson, of Cairncastle, read a paper on “The proper objective of the Sunday School,” strongly emphasising the need of religious teaching, and especially proper teaching of the Bible. In the discussion which followed, the Revs. J. H. Rossington, J. A. Kelly, A. O. Ashworth (convener of the Conference), R. M. King, and Mr. James Steel, took part, and it was brought to a close by the President. Mr. C. J. McKisack moved, and Mr. F. J. Orr seconded, a vote of thanks to the reader of the paper, and to the Larne congregation for their hospitality. Tea followed in the schoolroom, and in the grounds adjoining, much enjoyed in the sunny afternoon.

THE party of about thirty of our German visitors of last week, who remained behind when the main body returned home, that they might accept the further hospitality of Edinburgh and Glasgow, had a delightful visit to Scotland. The welcome they received from the Lord Provost of Glasgow and the University was specially hearty. General-Superintendent Faber, and Professors Althaus, Rade and Baumgarten were of the party, who were accompanied by Mr. J. Allen Baker, M.P. At the civic luncheon at Glasgow, Professor Baumgarten replied to the toast of the German Universities, and Dr. Faber and others to that of the guests. Baron de Neufville proposed “The Corporation of Glasgow,” and Mr. Allen Baker's health was also drunk. On Saturday in glorious weather the party made an excursion to the Trossachs, returning at night to London, to proceed to Plymouth and home.

THE welcome visits of foreigners to England with a serious friendly and edu-

cational purpose continue, to the advantage of all nations concerned. Besides the visits due to the Franco-British Exhibition and the recent tours of German Burgomasters and the Pastors, there has followed another, not the least significant—that of two parties of German workmen—sixty from Duisberg and about the same number from Düsseldorf, who have come over at the invitation of the Robert Browning Settlement, Walworth. Germans believe in travel, study very thoroughly, and will doubtless learn and teach much while under the auspices of their English friends. A visit to the Franco-British Exhibition, meetings with trade societies, co-operators, the Mayor of Greenwich, the Chairman of the London County Council, with accompanying hospitality, are included in the programme of a busy week.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES.

[Notices and Reports for this Department should be as brief as possible, and be sent in by Wednesday, or Thursday Morning at latest.]

APPEAL.

London: Bell-street Domestic Mission.

—The Rev. R. P. Farley writes:—“May I through your columns appeal to those who in former years have contributed to the funds for our summer outings, country holidays, flower show, &c., to be good enough to send their donations or subscriptions to me at 46, Bell-street, Edgware-road, as early as possible? We should also be glad if other friends could see their way to render us financial assistance for these objects.”

Horsham.—The 135th Whitsunday anniversary services were conducted by the Rev. J. Page Hopps, and were somewhat more largely attended than they have been of recent years. Taking as his subjects “The Message of Whitsuntide” and “Heretic and Seer,” Mr. Hopps delivered two very helpful and inspiring discourses. Friends from Billingshurst, Crawley, Brighton, Stratford, Hackney, Limehouse, and other places were present, and the beautiful weather conspired with the freshness of the summer foliage to render a day in this “home among the woods” very delightful. Collections amounting to nearly £9 were taken on behalf of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association and the Provincial Assembly. At the close of the evening service copies of the special number of the *Christian Life* were distributed to those present.

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OUR CALENDAR.

It is requested that notice of any alteration in the Calendar be sent to the Publisher not later than Thursday Afternoon.

SUNDAY, June 14.

LONDON.

Acton, Creffield-road, 11.15 and 7, Rev. ARTHUR HURN.
 Berrymondsey, Fort-road, 7, Rev. JESSE HIPPERSON.
 Blackfriars Mission and Stamford-street Chapel, 11 and 7, Rev. J. C. BALLANTYNE.
 Brixton, Unitarian Christian Church, Effra-road, 11 and 7, Rev. G. C. CRESSEY, D.D.
 Child's Hill, All Souls', Weech-road, Finchley-road, 11.15 and 6.30, Rev. EDGAR DAPLYN.
 Croydon, Free Christian Church, Wellesley-road, 11 and 7, Rev. R. P. FARLEY, B.A.
 Deptford, Church-street, 11.15 and 6.30, Rev. A. J. MARCHANT.
 Essex Church, The Mall, Notting Hill Gate, 11 and 6.30, Rev. F. K. FREESTON.
 Forest Gate, corner of Dunbar-road, Upton-lane, 6.30, Rev. H. WOODS PERRIS.
 Hackney, New Gravel Pit Church, Chatham-place, 11.15 and 7, Rev. W. W. CHYNOWETH.
 POPE; Flower Service, Collection in aid of Sunday School Funds.
 Hampstead, Rosslyn-hill Chapel, 11.15, Rev. H. GOW; and 6.30, Rev. STOFFORD A. BROOKE.
 Highgate Hill, Unitarian Christian Church, 11 and 7, Rev. A. A. CHARLESWORTH.
 Ilford, Assembly Rooms, Broadway, 7, Mr. R. W. PETTINGER.
 Islington, Unity Church, Upper-street, 11 and 7, Rev. E. SAVELL HICKS.
 Kentish Town, Clarence-road, N.W., 11.15 and 7, Rev. F. HANKINSON.
 Kilburn, Quex-road, 11 and 7, Rev. CHARLES ROPER, B.A.
 Lewisham, Unitarian Christian Church, High-street, 11 and 7, Rev. HENRY RAWLINGS, M.A.
 Little Portland-street Chapel, 11.15 and 7, Rev. J. PAGE HOPPS.
 Mansford-street Church and Mission, Bethnal Green, 7, Rev. GORDON COOPER, B.A.
 Peckham, Avondale-road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. J. HIPPERSON.
 Plumstead, Common-road Unitarian Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. L. JENKINS JONES.
 Richmond, Free Church, Ormond-road, 11.15 and 7, Rev. FELIX TAYLOR, B.A.
 Stepney Green, College Chapel, 11, Mr. W. R. MARSHALL; 3, Flower Service, Rev. G. CARTER; 7, Mr. EDWARD CAPLETON.
 Stoke Newington Green, 11.15 and 7, Dr. F. W. G. FOAT, M.A.
 Stratford Unitarian Church, 11 and 6.30.
 Wandsworth Unitarian Christian Church, East Hill, 11 and 7, Rev. W. G. TARRANT, B.A.
 Wimbledon, Smaller Worple Hall, 11 and 7, Rev. W. E. WILLIAMS, B.A.
 Wood Green, Unity Church, 11 and 7, Rev. Dr. MUMMERY.

ABERYSTWTH, New Street Meeting House, 11 and 6.30, Mr. D. R. DAVIES.
 BATH, Trim-street Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. J. M. McDOWELL.
 BLACKPOOL, Dickson-road, North Shore, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. ROBERT MCGEE.
 BLACKPOOL, South Shore Unitarian Free Church, Lytham-road South, 11 and 6.30.
 BOURNEMOUTH, Unitarian Church, West Hill-road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. C. C. COX.
 BRIGHTON, Free Christian Church, New-road, 11 and 7, Rev. PRIESTLEY PRIME.
 BUXTON, Hartington-road Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. GEORGE STREET.
 CANTERBURY, Ancient Chapel, Blackfriars, 10.50, Rev. J. H. SMITH.
 CHESTER, Matthew Henry's Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. D. JENKIN EVANS.
 DOVER, Adrian-street, near Market-square, 11 and 6.30, Rev. C. ARTHUR GINEVER, B.A.
 DUBLIN, Stephen's Green West, 12, Rev. G. H. VANCE, B.D.
 GUILDFORD, Ward-street Church, North-street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. F. TEASDALE REED.
 HASTINGS, South Terrace, Queen's-road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. S. BURROWS.
 HORSHAM, Free Christian Church, Worthing-road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. J. J. MARTEN.
 LEEDS, Mill Hill, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. C. HARGROVE.
 LEICESTER, Free Christian Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. GERTRUD VON PETZOLD, M.A.

LIVERPOOL, Ancient Chapel of Toxteth, 11 and 6.30, Rev. W. REYNOLDS, B.A.
 LIVERPOOL, Hope-street Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. H. D. ROBERTS.
 LIVERPOOL, Ullet-road, Sefton Park, 11 and 6.30, Rev. J. C. ODGERS, B.A.
 MAIDSTONE, Unitarian Church, Earl-street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. ALEXANDER FARQUHARSON.
 NEW BRIGHTON and LISCARD, Memorial Church, Manor-road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. E. PARRY.
 NEWPORT, Isle of Wight, 11 and 6.30, Rev. H. M. LIVENES.
 OXFORD, Manchester College, 11.30, Rev. JAS. C. HODGINS (late of Milwaukee, U.S.A.).
 PORTSMOUTH, High-street Chapel, 11 and 6.45, Rev. JAMES BURTON, M.A.
 PORTSMOUTH, St. Thomas-street, 11 and 6.45, Mr. T. BOND.
 SCARBOROUGH, Westborough, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. W. RODGER SMYTH.
 SEVENOAKS, Bessell's Green, The Old Meeting House, 11.
 SHEFFIELD, Upper Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. C. J. STREET, M.A., LL. B.
 SIDMOUTH, Old Meeting, High-street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. WILLIAM AGAR.
 SOUTHPORT, Portland-street Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. MATTHEW R. SCOTT.
 TORQUAY, Unity Hall, Lower Union-street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. A. E. O'CONNOR, B.D.
 TUNBRIDGE WELLS, Mechanics' Institute, Dudley-road, 11 and 6.30.
 WEST KIRBY, Tynwald Hall, opposite Station, 11 and 6.30, Rev. H. W. HAWKES.

GERMANY.

HAMBURG, The Church of the Liberal Faith, Logenhaus, Welckerstrasse, 11, Rev. GARDNER PRESTON.

SOUTH AFRICA.

CAPETOWN, Free Protestant (Unitarian) Church, Hout-street, 6.45, Rev. RAMSDEN BALMFOETH.

BIRTH.

BALL.—On June 5, at 4, Richmond-terrace, Southend-on-Sea, to Mr. and Mrs. Horace Ball, a daughter—Gladys Doris.

MARRIAGES.

HOLDEN—WOOD.—On June 9, at the Parish Church, Wokingham, by the Rector, the Rev. Bertram Long, the Rev. Alfred Cuthbert, eldest son of the Rev. A. M. Holden, of Warwick, to Violet Eva, of Kingscote, Wokingham, second daughter of the late Henry Wood, of Battersea.
 RATHBONE—EVANS.—On June 10, at the Parish Church, Wimbledon, by the Rev. Bernard Reynolds, Prebendary of St. Paul's, assisted by the Vicar, the Rev. J. Allen Bell, Herbert Reynolds Rathbone, of 35, Ullet-road, Liverpool, fifth son of the late Philip Henry Rathbone, of Liverpool, to Winifred Richardson, eldest daughter of Richardson Evans, of The Keir, Wimbledon Common.

DEATHS.

BLAZEY.—On June 5, at his residence, Sheffield, the Rev. William Blazeby, B.A., in his 76th year.
 MADOCKS.—On June 9, at his residence, 36, High-street, Chelmsford, Alfred Madocks, aged 77 years.

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THE ANNUAL MEETINGS

OF THE

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WILL BE HELD AT

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ON

SATURDAY, JUNE 20th, 1908.

As follows:—3.15 p.m., Business Meeting; 4 p.m., Service conducted by Rev. A. H. DOLPHIN, Sermon by Rev. W. COPELAND BOWIE; 5.30 p.m., Tea; 6.30 p.m., Public Meeting, Chairman, A. J. HOBSON, Esq., J.P.

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